

SOJOURNERS BY THE WAYSIDE

TRAVELERS
ON THE LONG ROAD



BY MÜLLER

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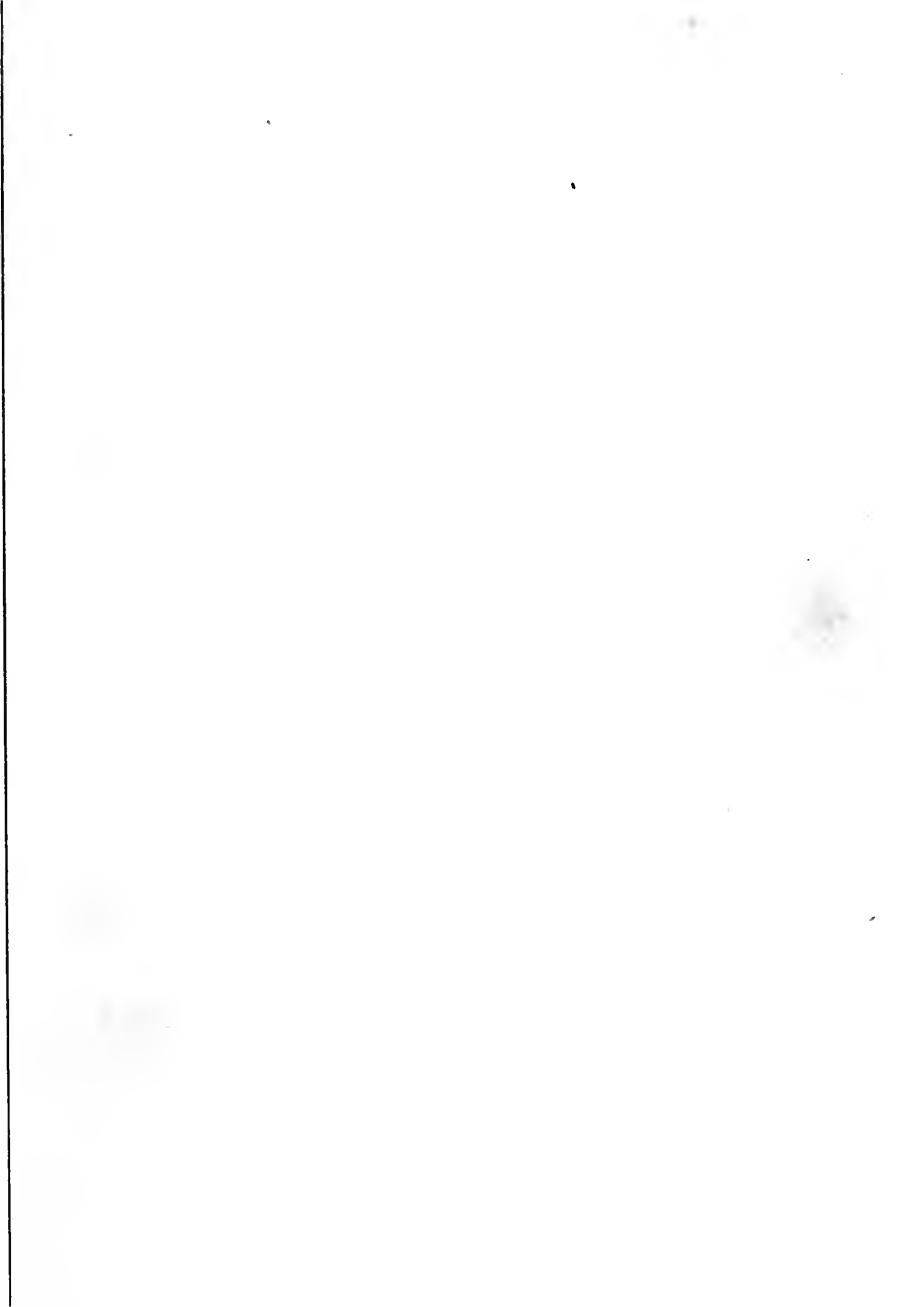
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BY
MÜLIÈR



"Thus the Seer,
With vision clear,
Sees forms appear and disappear,
In the perpetual round of strange,
Mysterious change
From birth to death, from death to birth,
From earth to heaven, from heaven to earth;
Till glimpses more sublime
Of things, unseen before,
Unto his wondering eyes reveal
The Universe, as an immeasurable wheel,
Turning forevermore
In the rapid and rushing river of Time."

Longfellow.



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DEDICATED TO THEO

A FRIEND GREATLY PRIZED,
WHO HAS INSPIRED ME TO WRITE THIS BOOK,
AND THROUGH WHOSE FRIENDSHIP,
LIFE HAS BROUGHT TO ME
A
FULLER MEASURE OF HAPPINESS.



"Nay, but as one layeth
His worn-out robes away,
And, taking new ones, sayeth
These will I wear today!
So putteth by the spirit
Lightly its garb of flesh,
And passeth to inherit
A residence afresh."

Edwin Arnold.

"Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting;
The soul that rises with us, our life's star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar.
Not in entire forgetfulness
And not in utter nakedness
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God who is our home."

Wordsworth.

FOREWORD

It may be in order to make a brief explanation as to the present production, which cannot be called a treatise on reincarnation, but the working out of an urge inspiring this effort. A friend, who is a firm believer in reincarnation, has kindly consented to let me trace—through the power which has seemed to be mine from early childhood—the experiences which have been made manifest from one period to another.

My method of obtaining these incarnations is to make myself receptive to the inflow and outflow of such fragments as may come,—at first to my objective consciousness, and, later, more forcefully, from my subjective consciousness,—while I am in the passive state. This being done, and all extraneous thought set aside, I find that, in dipping down into the

Sojourners by the Wayside

Universal Memory, traces of the past present themselves, both by vision, and by hearing, and by an uprush or vibration which I call the Inner Voice.

In this manner, every incarnation which has come to me for this friend, has at first been fragmentary. Then from time to time these fragments have coordinated, as it were, and, through this inner sight which I term vision, this inner sound which I call hearing and this vibration, or Voice, they have assumed form, or shape, and I have realized that that which has been given to me is truth.

This same Voice has also seemed to direct the manner in which these incarnations should be presented in the present volume. Suggestions have come to me, in the aforementioned manner, in regard to the weaving into each incarnation a background of time, place and atmosphere, and the introduction of other characters,—independent in a sense, and yet bearing an underlying relation to the incarnation. One such suggestion dealt with the insertion, between each separate incarnation and the one ensuing, of a page which might

Foreword

serve to the reader as an index of the real identity of the characters involved in the immediate incarnation,—each character retaining, as a given name throughout, the one under which he or she first appeared in the series.

My object in writing this book has been to prove, in a manner, the truth of Reincarnation, and, at the same time, to make it so simple and possibly interesting, that those, who have not heretofore considered the subject, will be quickened into the desire to learn more of its great teachings.

If this series should appeal to my readers in its mode of dress, I am prepared to give out more, relating to the principal entity. Thus far, I know without a question of a doubt, that all that has come to me, has, in one way or another, left faint recollections of having transpired in the mind of my friend.

Table of Contents

	FOREWORD	ix
I	WHAT THE SEA CAST UP	15
II	WHAT THE STARS FORETELL . .	29
III	THE SUN'S MESSAGE	49
IV	THE THREE	63
V	HE TAKES THE LONG ROAD . .	77
VI	WHAT THE SEA CLAIMED . . .	91
VII	THE OUTCOME	125
VIII	THE MASTERY	139
IX	VERITAS	153
X	FOR VICTORY	173
XI	THE PROPHECY OF THE STARS .	185
	AFTERWORD	202



WHAT THE SEA CAST UP

IN every direction,—water! Limitless seemed the supply. Low on the horizon, like a ball of fire, dropped the sun from sight, leaving an aftermath of color, wonderfully beautiful. In the midst of this gray expanse was, as though thrown up from the very depths of the sea, a basaltic cliff. Above, a mountain reared its hoary head.

This was only to be reached from the water by a giant causeway, hewn, in wide and deep steps, into the western face by the endless surge and flow of the tides. Over these steps a man could climb to the thick bed of shale, covering the curious formation and through which he could plough, ankle deep, until he reached a small lake. This lake united, not only with the base of the mountain, but also, with a smaller pond, so dark that no eye, even with the finest instrument, could see whether a living thing was expressed in its depths or not.

Out from a great crater, at the very top of

Sojourners by the Wayside

this mountain, fell a cataract like a living thing, dashing itself upon broad plateaus, sending forth tributaries forming smaller cascades, till, at last, cataract and tributaries assisted in keeping the lake filled to the brim with water, so sparkling, so reviving, that one felt instinctively that all suffering mankind might come and drink,—drink and be healed.

Near the crater two great eagles—powerful birds—had their home. There in solemn silence they sat, looking forth with grave attention, as though watching and waiting. Surely no ship ever sailed this way; nothing of jetsam or flotsam from the mighty deep was cast upon the cliffs to help feed them. Still, through endless days, they watched and waited. Now and then, on strong pinions, they soared away till lost to sight. It was while there were young in the nest that the larger of the two eagles brought back food, showing that, through eternal wisdom, knowledge had directed them where to procure sustenance.

The mountain, in places, was thickly covered with verdure; in others, by great boulders, jagged crevices and lava formations; while,

What the Sea Cast Up

two-thirds from its base, a mammoth cave gave shelter to a young man and woman.

This cave was grand in appearance. Exteriorly, a wide projection, or canopy, of lava formation, the outer edge of which looked, almost, as if carved into grotesque figures by the hand of man—was held in place by two round corrugated boulders. Before it was a broad plateau, covered with a peculiar sward, moss-green in color, soft and pliable to the feet. Here, as though some giant had felt the need of a resting place, two large stones furnished seats. The one at the right of the opening was long and wide, and over it the young man had spread a thick mattress of moss; the other was divided in the center by a low arm, or partition. Here the two young people sat and, like the eagles, watched and waited.

The young woman, sun-burned and browned by exposure, held in her gray eyes unfathomed depths. Their usual expression was a grave wistfulness; yet, at times, they fairly danced and sparkled with joy and laughter. Her stature was medium; her form slender. She was not what one might call beautiful, but

Sojourners by the Wayside

there was a radiance, a charm about her, which, through many a long day, had given to the young man by her side a comfort and a certainty, that her prophecy would come true,—the prophecy, that, if they would but possess their souls in patience, deliverance would come to them. Often she had said: "One ship sailed this way or we would not be here."

To which he replied, "Dear one, I know that life holds for us something more than death, or old age, upon this mountain of desolation."

She called this young man, Hermes; but his name for her was one of his own coining, and to hear it was sweet as liquid music. In face and form, they were of the Greek type, which, perchance, explains his name.

The two had been weeks—months even—in this desolate spot; and they had ventured, when hunger stared them in the face, to eat of strange fruits, even succulent roots which lay near the surface. By a long and arduous climb to the water they were able to catch fish by means of an improvised net. A fountain which gushed from one side of the cave furnished them with water.

What the Sea Cast Up

As time went on, Hermes felt within himself a fear so great, that it was difficult for him to hide it. This fear was not for himself, but for his beloved who was soon to become a mother. Their ages were nearly the same; she, eighteen; he, scarcely twenty.

* * *

Five years have elapsed. It is a blustering night; around the mountain the wind howls dismally. Forked lightning illumines the interior of the cave where Hermes' wife lies spent, giving birth to her fourth child. Over her bends her husband. His face no longer wears the look of early manhood. Trials and hard work, as well as endless thinking, have graven deep lines—indelible lines—which will ever leave their mark upon his forehead. And this is not all. His heart misgives him; for he suffers, not alone for himself, but for her whom no bonds but those of heaven have made his wife. Afreeda lies there, gasping for breath. Louder the sea roars, breaking against the rock-bound mountain. Suddenly shouts, mingled with shrieks of distress and fear, startle her. She cries out, "Hasten! loved one,

Sojourners by the Wayside

a ship! A ship has grounded on the outer reef!"

Hermes takes up the babe and places it close to its mother; then, with an inward prayer, hastens out into the darkness. Down the giant stairway he rushes, sure-footed, while, clearer and louder above the storm, come the screams and oaths of the wrecked ones.

Just then, as the wind ceases and a watery moon breaks through the black clouds, Hermes sees, struggling in the water, terrified faces and beseeching arms; hears his native tongue, and is, for a moment, uncertain how to render assistance.

At last he thinks of a strong net which the winter before he had made. With flying feet he brings it from a small stone hut, and, casting it down into the seething water, he is nearly torn from the steps by the wild struggles of those who endeavor to gain a foothold by seizing it.

Three were rescued in this manner—one a large man, who, afterward, gave valuable assistance in saving others. In the morning light it was seen that ten—five men, four

What the Sea Cast Up

women and one child—were still living, while many another lay dead upon the rocks.

Hermes brought the survivors into the stone hut, and fire helped to warm them into life before the glorious sun burst its bonds and set the world aglow with its revivifying breath.

Long before this, Hermes had returned to Afreeda. He had found her asleep, with her newly born babe clasped to her breast, while the three small children were also asleep, snuggled to her side, whither they had fled for protection.

The following day the mother and child, saved from the wreck, came to the cave upon Hermes' invitation; and there Loreta, the mother, imparted the sad news to Afreeda that her parents, four years before, had sailed in a large vessel to seek her, but that it had been lost at sea. As the tears fell from Afreeda's eyes, Hermes entered, his face aglow, a smile in his eyes, which surprised her, and she asked, "What is it, Hermes, have you not heard of my great loss?"

"Yes, dear one; but, in the great surprise I have received and the great joy that I am bringing you, I, for the moment, forgot what,

Sojourners by the Wayside

after all, may not be true,—that your parents are supposed to have been lost at sea. Dry your eyes, dear one, for I have two waiting on the plateau who long to embrace you, yet fear, in your weakened condition, lest it might do you harm.”

“Harm!” came a merry voice from the outer cave; “I, Clione, do my beloved sister harm! Was I not dropped here on purpose to bring back the roses to her cheeks? Let me pass, Sir!”—this to the large man who had rendered such assistance—“Stand back, Uncle Johan, it is my turn first.”

Afreeda, in her excitement, sat up and, with her eyes aglow, exclaimed: “Clione, Clione! Surely my prayer has been answered—how I have longed to see you!” Then, before Hermes could reach her, she gently fainted. It was then that Loreta and the child silently left the room. Soon Afreeda recovered; for joy seldom kills; but Hermes utterly refused admission to her uncle whose name, when not abbreviated, was Johanna.

From him Hermes learned that the severe storm had blown them out of their course; and it was a miracle that he and Clione had,

[22]

What the Sea Cast Up

through the shipwreck, found Afreeda, whom they had been seeking.

Clione had insisted, that she knew that her sister was alive, that she had heard her call her—heard her voice even—and, despite the loss of her father and mother by the treacherous sea, she had kept at her uncle with her importunities till he had consented, months before, to make another effort to find Afreeda.

“We had on board more than one, who knew and loved her; and a young man, who is now at the hut, often spoke of his brother who was on the same ship with my niece five years ago. By the way, this young man’s brother bore the same name as yourself, Hermes. Can it be possible that you are he!”

Hermes’ face had grown pale beneath the tan, as Afreeda’s uncle had been speaking. Together they hastened to where the young man lay raving in delirium. At first Hermes did not recognize him. When he had left home, his brother was but a boy, smooth of face; but, now, he saw a man, with a face swollen by the water and no longer smooth like a girl’s. As he stooped over him, the young

Sojourners by the Wayside

man cried out, "Hermes! Hermes! I must find you for our mother!"

* * *

Weeks passed. Those, who had been rescued from a watery grave, had regained their strength and spirits. High above the mammoth cave, they had arranged a beacon, which was constantly kept burning. They hoped in this manner to attract the attention of some ship that might come to their assistance.

The days became monotonous to all excepting Adone, Hermes' brother, and Clione. Love had liberated these two from anxiety, and touched every thing with its roseate hue. Clione took great interest in the children, especially Clione, the sickly babe, who had been ushered in on that night of storm.

Clione was the life of the party. Her thought, it was, that suggested the making of clothing out of the great leaves of a tall tree on the southern side of the mountain. It was with a fish bone, and some of the finer roots, that they were caught together. No one was idle, and Hermes almost forgot that he had called it "the Mountain of Desolation."

What the Sea Cast Up

As near as they could reckon, a year had passed, when, one day, Clione burst in upon her sister like a young whirlwind: "Come, Afreeda! Come and see!"

Out upon the expanse of water—plied by many a stout arm—the oars of a great ship sparkled in the sun's rays. It came direct toward the basaltic cliff. Men, women and children made a quaint picture, as they clustered around the head of the giant causeway, each in his or her way demonstrating delight.

Five days later the mountain was deserted; for they had embarked one bright sunny morning, on a homeward voyage.

It is three years, after their safe return, that I see Hermes, Afreeda and the children in a home where love reigns supreme. Hermes is sitting under a tree with missals and papyri before him. Afreeda, who is tending her flowers, helped by her young family, steals many a loving glance at the face she holds so dear. Out of a great cluster of olive trees, I see, strolling leisurely, Adone and Clione. A small boy holds, with one hand, Adone's; the other clings to his mother's white draperies.

They stop as they catch sight of Hermes

Sojourners by the Wayside

under the tree, and both regard with pride, as well as love, the one who well deserves the name which he bears. Understanding is written large upon the brow; love has set its signet upon the lips; while steadfastness of purpose and determination is expressed in the lower part of his face. One feels instinctively that some time, some where, he will give to posterity a name, which will touch the hearts of men, and quicken in them the desire for all that pertains to the highest. At times there is a slight movement of the shoulders, arms or hands, that makes one realize a great and fundamental truth:—that, to reach the goal of a lofty desire, one must forget self, perchance must suffer much, and drink the dregs of bitterness, as well as those of sweetness.

Afreeda welcomed her guests; and Hermes, awakening from the reverie into which he had fallen, asked many questions, regarding his mother and the uncle who had been on the mountain with them, and who was now in Egypt. There Hermes later joined him; but this was not until after a great sickness had pressed its blighting hand upon his loved

What the Sea Cast Up

ones—not until his heart had been rent by sorrow too deep for me to write.

In a day and a night, wife and children had been taken from him, also the mother he so dearly loved. It was after this great calamity, that he joined his wife's uncle, Johannes; and the remainder of his life he gave to his fellow men. It was in succoring an injured man, sick with the pestilence, that Hermes lost for the time all recollection of material existence, till, later on, in other incarnations, opportunity to test life from every angle, was given him, and my readers will see in what manner he availed himself of these opportunities which are for us all.

CHAPTER II

WHAT THE STARS FORETELL

"I know I am deathless.

I know that this orbit of mine cannot be swept by a carpenter's
compass;

And, whether I come to my own to-day, or in ten thousand or
ten million years,

I can cheerfully take it now or with equal cheerfulness I
can wait."

Walt Whitman.

HERMES.....Andronada
ADONE.....Andronada's Son
JOHANNESA.....Andronada's Father
AFREEDA.....Ninoneeta
CLIONE."Treasure"
LORETA.....One of the Twins
LORETA'S CHILD.....One of the Guides on Andronada's
Celestial Journey.

WHAT THE STARS FORETELL

AGES on ages ago, far back in prehistoric times, up a broad river leading from a great delta, stood a peculiarly constructed building, combining in its construction a fortified castle of great antiquity and a large rambling manor-house.

Standing on the stone steps laved by the river was a young man, tall, broad-shouldered and erect, with hair and eyes in such marked contrast to each other, that it gave to the finely chiseled face of clear olive, a weird fascination. The hair was of that distinct shade of yellow which is termed pale gold; while the finely penciled brows and long lashes were black; black were also the eyes.

He wore a soft under garment, extending from the shoulders to the knees, spotlessly white; while the white outer garment, with its loosely flowing sleeves, came to the ankles. This was enhanced by broad bands of yellow

Sojourners by the Wayside

silk embroidery, studded with pearls and emeralds. On his feet were sandals.

He was the last scion of a great and noble family,—the Justogardias. The four generations before Andronada's birth had been represented by men of great erudition; philosophy, astrology, as well as astronomy and other sciences, had been taught from father to son. They bore the name of "The Wise Justogardias." Andronada was twenty years of age when, in a single night, grandsire and father were gathered by the great reaper, Death, into that country which they had often visited in spirit, while yet living on the physical plane.

At the top of the great citadel had stood, from Andronada's earliest recollection, an heirloom of the Justogardias,—a mammoth telescope. Whence it had come and how long it had been in the possession of the family, his grandsire had promised to explain; but, like many another good intention, it had been neglected until it was too late. This telescope was not, according to modern construction; yet it never failed to render a clear reflection of the heavenly bodies. Andronada's love for

What the Stars Foretell

this friend of his childhood bordered on idolatry.

Night after night, during his young manhood, he had studied the heavens, and in the morning carried his mathematical calculations to his grandsire for approval. Now that he was alone, he depended, as never before, upon the forecasts depicted by the stars. In the still watches of the night he caught glimpses of other voices,—among which he recognized those of his grandsire and father,—coming from that spiritual universe which is not afar off, but is indissolubly linked with the physical plane.

Thus far this incarnation has come to me through sound; but now, a vision is given me; and, with this vision, I not only hear but feel the vibrations of the inner Voice, which pertains to the working out of the incarnation. I see Andronada on the great platform, looking through his beloved telescope with an earnestness, born of that which is being shown him. To me, also, comes the sound of voices; and, as I listen, I hear the description of that which is to take place; and, in the vibrations from the inner Voice, there comes to me the

Sojourners by the Wayside

realization that, on that evening in which Andronada stood on the stone steps, half conscious of the ripple of the river and of the moonlight, which lent to the great tropical forest a wondrous beauty, which made, as far as the eye could reach, a vast mirror of the water wherein the heavens were reflected, he was seeing that which had, in part, been shown him by the telescope. His sense of hearing was quickened, till he heard the soft patter of moccasined feet. Like a flash it came to him, that some war-like tribe, hearing that only a few aged retainers were at the manor-house, had thought it an opportune time to take possession of the feudal castle of the Justogardias.

The stillness of the night made every sound more distinct. He decided that it was time to reconnoitre. With hasty steps he turned into the forest, almost losing his foot-hold on the narrow bank against the outer wall. In a moon-lit glade he saw a great host of warriors of a reddish bronze,—men of great stature, broad of shoulders, bearing battle-axes made of stone, tall spears with stone heads, and bows and arrows. They wore nothing but breech-

What the Stars Foretell

cloths. Their hair was long and black; in the foremost ranks it was bound with fillets, some inlaid with precious stones, some with yellow gold, and others decorated with tall feathers. Women and children helped to swell this vast host.

In the center, supported by bearers, was a large litter upon which was stretched a man, so ancient that his skin looked like parchment. His hair was snow-white; but the eyes, which rested penetratingly upon Andronada, were black and keen as in youth. The aged chieftain was wrapped in a leopard's skin.

The contrast between the two men was marked. Andronada, with arms folded across his chest, smiled his welcome, his thoughts flying back and forth like a shuttle; for he was not only asking himself the object of this visit, but the reason for his composure, and from whence came the numerous ethereal forms that hovered above him. His grandsire and father were there; he seemed to hear them say, "It is well."

Just then the old chieftain spoke: "Art thou not afraid, Andronada? Have you warriors to fight your battles, or do you think we come

Sojourners by the Wayside

in peace?" As he was speaking, words came to Andronada from the angel throng; the voice was that of his grandsire.

Replying to the chieftain, Andronada said: "The Justogardias know not fear; my warriors are staunch and true. If you come in peace, I welcome you and throw open wide the doors of the Justogardia castle; if with thoughts of war, then I leave heaven and all the angels to fight my battles, for I deal not in blood. Three nights past the stars did tell me of your approach. Here, tonight, the voice of my grandsire bids me give you welcome."

The old man, with gesture to his bearers, was lifted into a sitting position; a curious smile wrinkled the corners of his mouth and crept into his eyes as he said: "I come in peace. Lead on; for I am tired and I accept your hospitality."

The following day Andronada visited the old chieftain, and, after an earnest conversation, they made a solemn compact, in the presence of witnesses, that Andronada should take into his domains the warriors and their families, and, nominally, be their head. The old man had said, that his days were numbered

What the Stars Foretell

and that, he would die happier, knowing that his followers would have for their chieftain the last of the Justogardias.

When the warriors had retired and they were once more alone, the old chieftain said: "Now, my young friend, I have a still greater charge to give into your care,—the daughter of my adoption. As you deal with her, may the Great Spirit deal with you. She is not of our blood; her parents are not known to me. I rescued her sixteen years ago,—a babe in a burning village. I had hoped to live to see her the queen of my people; but the hour has struck, and I know not at what moment we shall be parted. Give me your word—the word of a Justogardia—that you will protect her, if need be, with your life, and I will die content."

Five days passed, and, with them, slowly and peacefully, the sands of life ran out. With due pomp and ceremony, with his warriors and their families around him, the old chieftain was laid to rest in the moon-lit glade at the root of a great mahogany tree. Near his bier stood Andronada and Ninoneeta, the adopted daughter.

Sojourners by the Wayside

Three months later Andronada and the chieftain's daughter were made man and wife. She was a fair and beautiful bride; her brown hair and delicate complexion appealed to the young husband, while her laughing brown eyes often held in their depths a faraway expression, like that of one in accord with higher things. From the first of their acquaintance, Andronada had been surprised at her knowledge of the stars; her education on many subjects; and, above all, her purity and dainty womanly ways. Night after night the two watched through the great telescope the wonderful working out of destiny in the heavens, and together communed as to the future; for, in the panorama of the stars and planets, they read much of that of which history has demonstrated the truth.

When they had been married a year, twins were born to them. The boy was named for his father; his twin, for the mother. One year later a third child came to them, which was always called by both parents, "Our Treasure"; and she was indeed a rare treasure. The soft rings of reddish gold hair, the exquisite form and the dainty hands and feet, made one

What the Stars Foretell

think that she was too fair for the earth. When she first lisped a word in her baby voice, it was unlike anything that her parents had ever heard; yet they were able to define it.

Three years of such peace, as rarely comes to mortals, came to Andronada and his wife; for three years they were blessed with the earthly presence of their "Treasure"; and, in her strange speech, they caught glimpses of such beauty from the spiritual world, and of friends passed on before, that, when the summons came which deprived them of her smiling face, they had no tears with which to weep, but, instead, felt that they had given back that which had been loaned them for a while, and that sooner or later they would see her. The mother bore in silence the greater part of her grief for the sake of her husband, who, from the moment that their treasure was taken from them, buried himself, as it were, with his great telescope; wrapped in profound thought.

Day followed day in quick succession, when one evening, as Andronada was standing by the instrument—Ninoneeta near him,—he observed a peculiar light in the sky. At one

Sojourners by the Wayside

moment it seemed suffused, as though with blood; then this sanguinary hue changed to a pale yellow; again a soft purplish tint surrounded the stars, which, gradually, became overcast by a gossamer cloud. This gave to the purple an appearance of silver network. As they were remarking upon the beauty of this combination, Mars, with a baleful, reddish glare, seemed to hover over the castle, and the sky became inky black. The darker grew the sky, the more baleful seemed Mars. Nino-neeta cried out in fear: "Some great catastrophe is coming to the house of Justogardia!" Andronada laughed at her fears, even while he felt a strange foreboding, and asked her to return to where the children were sleeping; then he dropped into silent meditation.

Twice while he sat there he saw faces that were unknown to him, their whiteness standing out markedly against the dark sky; and, later, he heard what seemed like a great concourse of people running. He could hear the panting of their breath, and, at times, it seemed as if he caught words and shrill cries of alarm,—then all was silent.

This scene persistently quickened in his con-
[38]

What the Stars Foretell

sciousness,—making him feel that there had been a time when he had experienced a night such as this,—only in that forgotten time he had been an active participant,—had seemed to stay the ebb and flow, and, at last, to bring order out of chaos. As he sat there conscious of Mars—for everything was held in a stillness that could be felt—a voice, as from a long distance, came to him: “It is well to gird the armour of truth about you; to cast out fear; to trust implicitly; and, more than this, to know that no harm can befall you.” Then a feeling of peace wrapped him about. He entered deeper and still deeper into his inner self. The baleful light of Mars disappeared from his consciousness.

* * *

The vision, the sound, and the vibration of the inner Voice, left, and, then, as though something higher and finer took possession of me, I saw Andronada standing on the bank of a river,—not the river on which stood the ancient castle of the Justogardias,—but one on a higher sphere,—beyond the astral; and this

Sojourners by the Wayside

is what the vibration from the inner Voice brought to me:—

Not a sound came to Andronada—yet there was something more eloquent than sound. As he looked forth upon the broad, majestic river, he saw in its center, drifting, drifting with the current, a wonderfully built vessel,—sails, spars and decks luminously white. He looked to see who was guiding it and its name. At the prow he saw the “Treasure”, that had been loaned to Ninoneeta and himself. She was neither a babe nor a child, but a maiden surpassing fair. Around her were youths and maidens, clothed in white, each holding a curious-leaved plant of deep green, tipped with gold. On the prow of the vessel was a large white bird, with wings outspread and mystical eyes. Beneath this bird, in letters of gold, he saw the name of this strange vessel, “The Haven.”

Soon it drifted from his sight, but not before his loved one had thrown him a kiss. The light from her eyes seemed to thrill every portion of his being, and, as the vessel was lost to sight, he caught the refrain of a song:

What the Stars Foretell

“Higher and still higher,
Till the heart’s desire,
Lived out here to its full,
Bringeth to man at last,
Out of the past,
The knowledge of Truth.”

“Then as he aspires,
Through healing fires
The dross is cleansed away;
Through suffering and seeking,
Through Love universal,
He has learned the Truth and the Way.”

* * *

Andronada awoke with a start, feeling that someone was near him; but, although he looked quickly about him, he saw no one. That night, looking through his telescope, it seemed as if the stars were brighter, as if Mars had lost his redness, while Venus looked smilingly upon the earth. When he retired to his room, he found a piece of parchment on which was shown a perfect picture of the ship of his vision, and, beneath it, the song that he had heard, written in strange hieroglyphics; and he felt, that the hand that had drawn the picture and written the words was the hand of the maiden at the prow of the ship,—their “Treasure.”

Sojourners by the Wayside

A week later, while in meditation, his father's voice bade him meet him at the glade. He did so; and, although he did not see his father, he heard his voice saying: "Prepare for a journey which you must make alone." Andronada attended to certain details and explained to Ninoneeta his purpose, bidding her feel no anxiety regarding him.

A few nights later, after taking a fond farewell of his wife and children, Andronada sat down in the glade alone and waited. Soon he heard sweet strains of music, which heralded the approach of those who were to show him the way and guide him through those countless spheres which are not often seen until after the great change which man has called death. Nearer and nearer they drew; then swiftly, steadily, without fear and with a perfect trust in his guides, he passed through countries that he had never seen before; saw peaceful fields, great torrents breaking in cascades down mountains; saw men with the lust of battle in their eyes, men still fighting, while the ground was strewn with dead; saw great mosques, large citadels, great forests, larger than he had ever seen before; and, at one time, such a vast body

What the Stars Foretell

of water that it seemed that there could be no more land.

At last he rose higher and still higher. All material things drifted from him. He wondered, as he looked about him and saw, how like and yet how unlike, was everything that his eye rested upon; he then realized, that the material world was not so dissimilar to this higher spiritual world as he had once thought. One felt no effort here to move, to breathe or to think. Here was no struggle for existence, no lack of the beautiful, no inability to enjoy; for even before the wish or thought had fully shaped itself,—was it for shelter, for food, or for power to help others,—the fruition of that desire was at hand. He felt no fatigue, met many travelers,—few that he had known. He saw, as it were, a duplicate of everything that he had ever seen, each possessing a definite attribute, which set it apart from those of the material world. He saw many who knew more than he had ever dreamed of knowing; also many who were just beginning to get an insight of truth.

The one great distinction between the spiritual and the material world was, that those

Sojourners by the Wayside

who had trained, even to the slightest, their spiritual understanding, had developed their intuitional nature,—the higher spiritual consciousness. This was, in proportion to the impulse or desire while on earth, to lift themselves into all that was beautiful.

From place to place, without apparent effort, without any feeling of fatigue, Andronada journeyed; seeing, hearing, and, what was more remarkable, through some unknown substance, perceiving, even before he reached certain places, keenly and vividly the events which were to occur when he had reached his destination. Sometimes he traveled in company with others; at such times he seemed to grasp their view-point, as well as his own.

At one period of his journey he came to a lovely mansion surrounded by trees and flowers, such as he had never seen in earth-life; and the great gardens surrounding this, evident abode of peace, were filled with little children whose faces radiated sunshine. As he neared a garden, smaller than the two which he had traversed, he beheld his "Treasure." Rushing forward, he clasped her in his arms, and felt her kisses upon his cheeks.

What the Stars Foretell

The ecstasy, the deep intense love that he felt, seemed to set them apart from all that surrounded them; the flowers, the trees, the children's laughing faces; even the birds, whose music had charmed his ears, seemed to leave them to themselves.

It was then that he felt what it was to be a father,—the sacredness of the tie,—and picture after picture passed before his vision, showing her as when first she left her mortal body; then as grown older; again as a maiden fair and lovely to the eye. But that was not all. He realized that she was no longer a part of this earthly life, but something too fair, too pure for even him—her father—to comprehend.

As she radiated this intense glow of pure white light, she said in a voice throbbing with love: "You are needed at home. Return, and before long I will meet you; for your present pilgrimage on earth is nearing its end, and soon the house of Justogardia will live no more even in the memory of man."

A kiss, as though the petals of a rose wet with dew had been pressed to his lips; and, then, he felt that he was no longer with her.

Sojourners by the Wayside

Once on this homeward journey, which he was swiftly taking, he heard cries and lamentations; but from the moment he left her to return to the castle of the Justogardias, even though he felt the urge to press forward, a soft gray mist hid everything from sight.

* * *

At last Andronada was at home; but was this Justogardia! The castle and the manor-house were no more; the great wall that had encircled them had vanished. The river was the same and the forest,—even the lonely grave in the glade,—but where was Ninoneeta? What had become of the two children?

Though he asked this question over and over again, only a feeling of desolation answered him. Weary and sad, he fell asleep; and, in his sleep, a vision came to him of a horde of men who had demolished the castle; killed his brave men-at-arms, their wives and children; and had borne into captivity his beloved wife and children. He saw them, also taking away with them, his treasured telescope, which they treated like some charmed thing which might do them harm.

What the Stars Foretell

He awoke only to sleep again. This time he saw Ninoneeta, the children, his grandsire, his father, and with them his "Treasure." He now realized, that he had joined his loved ones, and that they, as well as himself, had left the material plane of existence. He also learned what he had been taught as a truth:—

THAT SOONER OR LATER EACH ONE WOULD RETURN, AND, IN FUTURE INCARNATIONS, WORK OUT GOD'S GREAT PLAN; FOR, WHATEVER THEY HAD SOWN OF GOOD, WOULD BE AS STEPPING STONES WHICH WOULD HELP THEM TO ROUND THEIR DESTINY.

CHAPTER III

THE SUN'S MESSAGE

"Eternity, thou pleasing, dreadful thought,
 Through what variety of untried being,
 Through what new scenes and dangers must we pass?
 The wide, th' unbounded prospect lies before me,
 But shadows, clouds, and darkness rest upon it."

Addison.

HERMES	Otho
ADONE	Rosso
CLION	Leo
JOHANNESA.....	The Priest
AFREEDA	Ruth
CLIONE	Margie
LORETA	Ora

THE SUN'S MESSAGE

THERE comes to me the vision of Thebes,—Thebes with her many walls, her great fortifications, her numerous gates. I am shown a mosque. I see upon the steps kneeling worshippers who have removed their sandals. In the great entrance is a colossal figure, arrayed in white vestments, with a superb head, eyes as blue as the summer sky. The face is smooth; the head, which is held erect, is crowned with a thick growth of silvery white hair. It is a majestic figure, austere and imposing.

Among the worshippers I see a youth, also smooth of face. I catch the note of benediction, which falls from the lips of the one in white vestments, as he extends his hand over the head of this young man, Otho. By the side of Otho, who is about twenty-five years of age, kneels his brother, Leo. Leo is fair.

The blue eyes of the priest smile upon the younger man, as the two brothers leave the

Sojourners by the Wayside

kneeling figures and enter the place of worship. He then follows, passes and takes his seat with three other white robed figures at the extreme end of the barren stone chamber.

* * *

It is night. I see Otho and his brother superbly mounted, riding richly caparisoned horses through the main street toward the northern gate. A tall house, dark and forbidding in appearance, stands at the right, not far from the gate.

As they drew rein, the door flew open, and two lackeys reached the horses' heads before the young men could dismount. At the threshold, Otho, as though something had caused him to change his mind, turned, leaving his brother; and, with a sombre expression upon his face, remounted his horse. Putting spur to the fine animal, he rode, like one demented, at a breakneck pace to another quarter of the city.

Here all was light and merriment. Like one well accustomed to being received, he pushed by the lackeys standing near the open door, mounted a flight of broad stone steps,

The Sun's Message

and, when he had reached the corridor above, he hastened to a room at its farther end. He rapped, yet scarcely waiting for response,—opened the door.

In a small room, hung with tapestries, and silken draperies rose color in hue, lay a beautiful woman in a voluptuous position. She pretended not to have heard Otho's step upon the thick rugs which covered the floor; but he, knowing her well, was not deceived.

“Argillie, why pretend? I have come for my answer. If it be ‘yes,’ by this time tomorrow we shall have left Thebes; if it be ‘no,’ then look to it! For, as true as my father was an honorable man and my mother a woman above reproach, I shall keep my word; and that, which I said to you the other evening, will come to pass.”

A slow smile crept about her mouth; an expression seductive, yet with a certain feline cruelty in it, shone in her eyes, as she lifted her heavy lids, which, up to this moment, had covered them. Her voice was low and musical as she said,—half playfully,—waving a white feather fan to and fro:

“Is this the way, Sir, for a knight to enter

Sojourners by the Wayside

his lady's bower to demand the answer which he has protested many a time, that, if it be 'yes,' he would find life an Elysian field,—the very breath he drew from her lips, an elixir that would make life eternal? Where hast thou been? Surely some great power has usurped thee to change thee from a loving, fastidious man into a boor!" Then, half rising upon her elbow, thus displaying her exquisitely rounded arm and bust, she continued: "If you will have my answer; it is no! Didst thou dream that I would marry thee?—thee whose eyes are green with jealousy,—who sees in a gentle smile or a kind word, given to another man, reason for displaying a temper which no woman would endure for a moment! Didst think it was love which prompted me? Then know—know once for all—that every smile, every honeyed word, every indulgence upon my part, was because I wished to teach thee a lesson! Many a time I have laughed with my women over thy silly speeches. I am weary of them and thee; never let me see thy face again,—your very breath pollutes the room! Glower at me, if thou wilt,—I fear not thee. Who would believe the word of a

The Sun's Message

simple knight against the daughter—well—thou knowest who I am and what I am. I have already another lover to take thy place. Begone! I say, begone!”

Otho's face had turned ashen white; his eyes gleamed and scintillated like black diamonds while she berated him. He drew himself more and more erect, and, when she finished speaking, without a word, without a glance at her false face, he turned his back upon her and left the room and the house. Bestriding his black steed, which stood pawing the ground, impatient to be away, down to the southern port he rode, out through the different gates till he reached the country, never looking back, still at a headlong pace, heeding not whither he was going. It was not until his good steed, spent with the pace and the distance, stumbled for the second time, that Otho drew rein. Dismounting, he unloosed the bridle, then with a pat upon his horse's neck, he turned him loose and threw himself down upon the turf. Staring into the heavens thickly studded with stars, he half-unconsciously took in their steely glitter, and thought them like all the world, pitiless.

Sojourners by the Wayside

Leo had watched his brother's rapidly disappearing form, and, with a half smile upon his lips, went whistling to his room. A bright light was burning there; on the small table, standing in an open window, was a tray containing a goblet of milk, bread and honey. Crossing to an open fireplace, he kicked the logs together, and, as he watched the sparks fly upward, he mused aloud: "Poor Otho! To think that he should be led like a willing puppy-dog by such a woman,—one who is not worthy for any good man to speak with—much less to love! The shepherd, to whom I often go, told me the other night, that he saw in the stars a great sorrow coming to Otho,—that my brother and I were to be parted; and, when in fear I asked if Otho through this light of 'love' was to lose his honor or his life, he slowly shook his head, saying, 'The Gods forefend.' The most that he told me was, that Otho's path and mine would run apart for years, that he was to pass through deep waters, while I would take up the calling, which Otho planned for me at the suggestion of our father."

When three days had passed and Otho did
[54]

The Sun's Message

not return, Leo grew exceedingly anxious. At last he learned, that, on the very night of their parting at the house door, Otho had been seen passing through the outer gate with his horse's head turned toward the south.

* * *

Thus far, what has been written, has come to me by sight and by hearing. I have seen, in a clear vision, the places and the persons I have described. I have not only seen, but have heard clearly the voices and the words spoken. Now I feel that vibration, which always comes to me, when that of great import concerning those of whom I am speaking, is verified by the Inner Voice.

* * *

Two years later, Otho stood on the top of a high hill, thickly covered with indigenous trees, looking at the sun. It warmed his body, which was almost nude. Beside him stood his horse, the faithful companion of his wanderings. In the sun's rays he saw a promise, which seemed to melt the hardness and the rebellion which had held him in a vise-like grip since that evening when all of faith and trust had left him,—as he thought forever.

Since leaving Thebes he had scarcely seen a human face. He had subsisted on whatever came to hand that was edible. Often he had been tempted to end it all; and, had it not been for his black steed, he would have done so. Otho could not forget how this faithful animal had, on that eventful night, turned to him instead of wandering away for food and water; how once when he—a strong man—had groaned aloud in his anguish, he had felt the soft tongue of his horse lapping his cheek in dumb sympathy. As the stars grew dim, he had partially fallen asleep; something, he knew not what, awoke him suddenly. His horse was snorting, rearing, plunging, and, as he realized his strange behaviour, he had sprung to his feet. He saw crouching,—just ready to spring,—a huge tiger. Then there had awakened in him a strong desire for life; and, knowing that he was not prepared to cope with this fierce animal, he had let out a blood-curdling yell; and, leaping on his horse's back, had ridden like the wind.

As Otho stood, thinking over that night, something new was born in him; from that moment he determined to leave this lonely

The Sun's Message

spot, and once more seek companionship with those of his kind. Fearing that he might not keep his good resolution, he harnessed his horse, put on the tattered remnants of clothing left him, and turned his face toward the sun, as he rode down the hill.

Fortunately for him, he had gold in his pocket,—a larger amount than usual. Of this, upon his arrival in a distant town, he expended a portion in clothing; and, when rested, pushed his way to where a great lord was forming a company. All through that section, feudal lords were fighting each other. Joining a free company, he soon, by his valor which bordered on recklessness, won so many encomiums from his superior officer, that he was brought to the attention of the feudal baron, under whose banner he had shown such prowess, that it had won for him the name of “Otho the Terrible.”

When his services were no longer needed, he formed a free company of his own; and, all through the country, he and his followers found no trouble in selling their services for a price, far beyond that commanded by similar organizations.

Sojourners by the Wayside

Five years Otho continued his precarious profession of arms. Then, being possessor of a goodly sum and having met a young maiden, simple in manners, chaste, one who reminded him of his own mother, he asked her hand in marriage. Her father, being favorably disposed to his suit, Ruth and he were wedded; and Otho forgot, in his love for his wife, the love which he thought he had felt for another; only in his dreams did he recollect the woman, who came so near to wrecking his life. He often thought of his brother, wondering what had become of him; he longed to see him, but Thebes was afar off; and, in his son which his wife in the second year of their marriage had borne him, he had found a new purpose in life.

This was the only child that lived. Otho gave him his own father's name, saying to his wife: "If he but lives to be as brave a soldier, as honorable and true a gentleman as his grandsire, you and I, Ruth, will have reason to be proud." But Ruth insisted on his being called not only Rosso, but persisted, whenever she spoke to her boy in name, in calling him Rosso-Otho.

Young Rosso, under his father's guidance,
[58]

The Sun's Message

grew to be a fine horseman. He could handle a spear, a battle-axe, or a sword with the best of his father's old followers, when he was fourteen years of age. These were not his only accomplishments; for his father also taught him how to care for an estate; how to tell whether the configurations of the stars and planets boded good or ill; and, more than this, Ruth taught her son how to sing. Rosso was manly and attractive to the opposite sex,—even in adolescence. His father's watchfulness and instruction kept him from many follies, such as had been his in early youth.

Ruth had a sister, two years younger than herself, who lived some twenty miles from their home. This sister, Ora, had a daughter, an only child, a year younger than Rosso. Ora was a widow, and there were times when she and her daughter, Margie, would come to Ruth's home and stay months at a time. As the two cousins met so frequently, they learned to love each other; and, before they were twenty, were man and wife.

Otho was very happy,—happy in his wife and in his two children. One day when he and Rosso were hunting a lioness, which had been

Sojourners by the Wayside

stealing lambs for her own brood, Otho met with a serious accident. His horse stepped into a hole, throwing his rider. Rosso, realizing that the danger was from the lioness, made bold to attack her.

With steady hand he launched his spear, and, so true was his aim, that it struck the very center of the infuriated animal's eye. As she gave out a terrible scream of agony, they saw rushing to her assistance, her mate. Margie had gone to her father, and helped him to rise to his feet. With a groan of pain he would have fallen to the ground, had not the sight of the maddened animal steadied his nerves sufficiently to enable him to take sure aim at the lion.

It was well that strength had been given him to do this, for Rosso's second spear had failed of its mark. Still as the two animals lay, making futile attempts to rise, Rosso threw his battle-axe, with such good purpose at the male, that it cleft his skull. Margie had flown home on her good horse's back, returning with strong men and a litter for Otho. Despite the pain he was suffering from broken bones, it was a march of triumph; for they

The Sun's Message

brought back with them, besides their lord, the lion and lioness which had been ravishing the country.

* * *

A year later, a traveler stopped at the door, accompanied by his wife and two children. It was Leo. He had been for years seeking his brother. There was great rejoicing, and Otho, who had never been strong since his accident, found great comfort in his brother's company.

Leo brought a message to him from the man in white vestments who had placed his hand upon his head in benediction. This was the message:

"THE GODS HAVE BEEN MOST KIND TO THEE: THE EVILS WHICH BESET THY YOUTH, THE STARS HAVE SHOWN TO ME, NO LONGER BESET THY PATH. GOOD HAS COME OUT OF EVIL. HE WHO SEEKETH PEACE THROUGH ATONEMENT, WHO AWAKENS TO THE KNOWLEDGE THAT LIFE IS NOT FOR FOLLY, NOR FOR THE GRATIFICATION OF THE SENSES, AND BETIMES TAKES THAT PATH WHICH LEADS HIM ON TO CLOSE COMMUNION WITH HIS SOUL, SHALL IN FUTURE AGES LEARN THE LESSONS OF LIFE."

CHAPTER IV

THE THREE

“Were our Beings once together twin’d?
Was it therefore that our bosoms pin’d?
Were we in the light of suns now dead,
In the days of rapture long since fled,
Into One united?”

Schiller.

HERMES Plubis
AFREEDA Inder
CLIONE Reginia

THE THREE

THE quickening of sight shows me, as an uprush from the subliminal, a young girl, running across one of the main streets of Memphis, knocked down by the prancing horses, harnessed tandem to the gorgeous chariot of Plubis.

He was of a princely house, and this was the first time he had been unfortunate enough, when driving, to occasion injury to man, woman or child. Quickly he reined in his fiery steeds, tossed the reins to his attendant; then, with his own hands, gathered up the stricken girl, and, taking the reins once more, drove with lightning speed to the princely mansion which was his own private estate.

On arriving he placed her in the care of the major-domo, bidding him see that she had every attention. "Call in my personal leech, and tell him to use his utmost skill; for I would not have it on my conscience, that,

Sojourners by the Wayside

through my reckless driving, I had killed or maimed a human creature. Report to me his opinion as to her state. I would see him myself, but I have scant time to get ready for the fiesta." Hastening to his private apartment, where he was bathed and dressed, he started forth to take his part in the great pageant.

Three days elapsed before he thought to make inquiries about the young girl. It was, then, that he learned her sad story. She was an orphan, and blind. That very day she had been turned into the streets to steal, to beg or get her living as best she might. Her parents had died when she was too young to remember them. They had left money for her support; but the money had been squandered, and, now that it was all gone, the cruel hearted woman who had promised to be a mother to her, had—after beating her brutally—turned her into the streets with many a taunting word. Half dazed and thoroughly afraid, Regina had attempted to cross the main thoroughfare. Hearing the sound of horses, she began to run. The next thing she knew, she had been hurled down beneath the horses' feet. When she

The Three

awoke to consciousness, she realized that she was in a strange room; that a stranger was pressing his fingers upon her head. He was asking questions of someone,—questions that she was too confused to understand. They had given her some medicine, which made the dull pain about her head grow less, and she slept. The next day she heard the same voice,—this time addressed to her. It was then that she told him that she was an orphan without a home; but some strange reticence kept her, at first, from telling how she had been turned into the streets, or of the cruel blows which made her back and shoulders throb with pain. It was the leech who—after examining her for bruises—seeing the great welts, had by questioning learned her pitiful story.

When Plubis heard, through his major-domo, that the young girl was but twelve years of age, blind, and an orphan, he, with his housekeeper, went to see her. He was struck with the suffering, the patience and the purity of the emaciated face, which became suffused with a pink tinge when he asked her how she

Sojourners by the Wayside

would like to live in his house, to be taught and prepared to join the vestal singers.

"Like! It would be heaven, my prince!"

* * *

Reginia from that moment became an inmate of Plubis' home, and once—two years later—when Plubis lay stricken with fever, tossing in delirium, it was Reginia's voice, lifted in song, which had quieted him so that he slept. In the stir and bustle, after his recovery, he forgot the blind girl under his roof.

Time wore on. Plubis fell in love with Inder. Her black eyes and purplish black hair made her complexion dazzlingly fair. Slender, graceful, with small patrician hands and feet, what wonder that Plubis looked no farther in choosing a mate. She was naturally kind of heart; her worst trait was jealousy. While in this mood, she was wholly unreasonable.

One day, after they had been married nearly a year, she asked Plubis, who was the maiden that all the servitors looked upon as an angel visitant. Now Plubis had forgotten entirely

The Three

Reginia's existence. For a moment he stopped to think of whom Inder could be speaking. She, becoming impatient, exclaimed:

"Do not try to deceive me, Plubis! I have seen her more than once. They say she is not a slave; but when I asked if she was a poor relation, they pretended surprise, but gave me no information. Tell me who she is! Surely you would have done so long ago had there been nothing to be ashamed of!"

As if to answer, Reginia's voice taking the high notes in one of the vestal hymns, rang like a silver bell; and Inder, turning to her prince, said: "After that, you cannot deny the presence of the maiden they called Reginia!"

"Reginia! The name is familiar. It awakens within me memories elusive,—Ah! I have it! If I am not mistaken, that was the name of the blind girl whom, years ago, my horses knocked down. It was a miracle that she was not killed."

"You seem to have some doubt. We will decide it." Reaching out her hand, she rang the bell impatiently. A slave responded, to whom she said: "Ask Reginia to come here. Your lord wishes to speak with her." Then

Sojourners by the Wayside

turning to Plubis, she asked: "When did you last see this prodigy of virtue?"

"If she be the one whom my horses knocked down,—which, by the way, Dearest,—was the day I first met you—it must be three or four years ago; but here she comes!"

The portierre at the end of the room had been held aside by a slave; Plubis saw a tall, slender figure, a head covered with soft, fluffy curls of chestnut brown, a face pure in its expression, with a peach-like complexion, cheeks tinged with a warm color. Down the long room she came in a somewhat timid manner till she reached Plubis, when, with a graceful inclination of her head, she stood awaiting him to speak.

In the meantime Inder, watching her lord, caught the expression in his eyes,—the half questioning light as he first saw her,—then the sudden wakening to certainty, as he looked more intently at her.

"Can this be you! The child whom the gods protected, grown into a woman! Art thou happy here,—never lonely? Tell me how you have passed the years; whether all have been kind to you."

The Three

Reginia replied: "Most kind, my lord, and, as for me—the despised and lonely orphan—life here has seemed like heaven. I have studied and prepared to enter the temple as a vestal; I have only awaited your command to do so."

"Can it be you whom we heard singing a short time ago? My Inder here did think it was."

A warm blush came to her cheek, as Reginia replied: "I think it must have been, my lord."

"If that be so, thou canst join the vestals when thou desirest."

With a bow and a smile, Reginia retired.

"Plubis, did you not say that the girl you saved was blind? Surely she must have been deceiving you! Did you not mark the expression in her brown eyes? If she cannot see,—then I cannot."

"Come to think of it, Inder, I did remark the tender light,—the expression in her eyes, as of one who, after walking in darkness, had come into her own; for her eyes spoke of rejoicing, not unmixed with love."

Plubis had not remarked the red flare, rising in Inder's face,—the gleam in her black eyes,

Sojourners by the Wayside

bespeaking a rising temper; therefore, he was unprepared for what followed. Never before had he seen her as today. The tone of her voice had lost its sweetness; the lace handkerchief which she held in her hand was torn to bits and she so far forgot herself as to tax him with infidelity. He listened in silence, knowing that, when the paroxysm was over, she would repent of her hasty words. Suddenly, Inder burst into a storm of weeping which Plubis thought best not to heed. At last, as she became more quiet, he put his arm about her and, drawing her closely to his side, pressed a kiss upon her tear-stained cheek.

"O Plubis! Plubis! Can you ever forgive me?"

For answer he drew her more closely to him. It was then that they both heard Reginia singing: "Love binds us to each other; God is our strength and shield!"

* * *

Plubis made a royal figure as, mounted on his great black stallion, at the head of a troop of horse, he rode away to the war. Inder, watching him from her window, dry-eyed, for her feelings were too deep for tears, remem-

The Three

bered, as he drove from sight, more than one unkind speech she had made; and, as she thought, tears came—tears of repentance.

Days — weeks — months passed by, — each one more full of suspense than the other. At last her loneliness became unbearable. She sent a message to the temple, asking that Reginia might be spared to her for a while.

Her request was granted. Once again Reginia was installed in the home of the prince, her benefactor; and, for a time, Inder felt less lonely; then, becoming jealous of Reginia, and, learning by a trusty messenger, that her lord, the prince, was returning severely wounded, she told Reginia, that it was best for her to return to the temple.

The morn of the day, when Prince Plubis was borne to his home, was the morning when Reginia, grieved at her dismissal, once again entered the cell, which seemed narrow and confined, after the luxurious room which had been hers for a time.

Prince Plubis' wound was mortal; his suffering was intense. The evening of his arrival, he asked for Reginia, saying, that he felt that if he could hear her sing, he might sleep.

Reginia came. Inder sat beside her lord, holding his hand. Reginia stood at the foot of the couch, her voice—clear as a bell, yet tremulous—sang the vestal hymn for the “soul departing.”

Plubis watched her through half closed lids till the hymn ended, then he said: “I can sleep.” Inder motioned her to retire. As she was about to do so, Plubis spoke again: “Stay, Reginia; I may wish you to sing again; but do not stand.” A silence, that could be felt, lay upon the chamber.

Two hours passed. Plubis slept. At last, with a restless movement, he awoke. “Are you here, Inder?” he asked.

“Yes, Dear One; cannot you feel my hand in yours?”

A gentle pressure was his reply. “Is Reginia here?”—this in a whisper—“I would like to hear her sing again.”

Quietly Reginia came to the foot of the couch, and, once again, sang the hymn for the “soul departing.” A smile broke over Plubis’ face, as he said in a clear voice when she had ended: “You see, do you not, Reginia?”

The Three

"Yes, kind friend, thanks to you and the gods."

"Inder, it is my wish that you and Reginia should be as sisters. Promise me that it shall be so before I go to await you—yes—await you both!"

* * *

When, with great pomp and ceremony, the mortal remains of Prince Plubis were laid in the family vault, with those of his fathers', as Inder did not ask her to remain, Reginia returned to the temple, bearing with her a flower taken from the wreath which had crowned Plubis. Two years later she was found asleep with this flower over her heart. Inder knew, then, when she was told of this, that Reginia had loved the prince.

* * *

THROUGH THE ENDLESS AGES OF THE PAST,
WHO CAN TELL HOW MANY TIMES THESE
THREE HAVE CROSSED EACH OTHER'S PATH!
WHO CAN TELL, IN THE COUNTLESS AGES OF
THE FUTURE, HOW MANY TIMES THEY WILL
MEET, LOVE AND PART; FOR, IN THE GREAT
CYCLES, THOSE WHO HAVE FELT A LOVE, HIGHER

Sojourners by the Wayside

THAN THAT OF THE MATERIAL, ARE ATTRACTED TO EACH OTHER AGAIN AND AGAIN.

THUS, THROUGH IMMUTABLE LAW, "LOVE ATTRACTS LOVE." BE IT OF THE HIGHER, THE REAL, THE DROSS OF LIFE IS CLEANSED AWAY, AND THE SPIRIT RISES TO ITS SOURCE. THUS ALL IS FULFILLED; THUS MANKIND BECOMES PERFECT.

CHAPTER V

HE TAKES THE LONG ROAD

"The weary pilgrim oft doth seek to know
How far he's come, how far he has to go."
Quarles.

HERMES	Zeberos
ADONE	Stephen
JOHANNESA.....	The Widow's Brother
AFREEDA	Alena
CLIONE.....	The Adopted Boy
LORETA'S CHILD.....	The Widow

HE TAKES THE LONG ROAD

A YOUNG novitiate, named Zeberos, had been taken from his people to become a neophyte in the great temple, dedicated to Thoth and Osiris. In his heart, he was faithful to the religion of his race. Inwardly, he rebelled, when bidden to begin his novitiate.

I first see him,—drawn from the Universal Memory,—a lad of fifteen, robed in a loose flowing garment of spotless white, with sandals on his feet. I see him crossing one of the great corridors, with a lamp, in his hand, covered with mythological figures, standing out in bas-relief.

The light from the lamp fell full upon his face, which was thin, almost to emaciation. His hair was black; also his eyes, which were keen and penetrating. His aquiline nose and sensitive mouth made a strong contrast to the extreme lower portion of his face, which

[77]

Sojourners by the Wayside

showed marked determination, bordering on aggressiveness.

As he turned into a narrower corridor on the right, where all was dark around him, he extinguished the light of his lamp and placed it carefully under his arm, beneath the white robe. As he did this, an expression of defiance flashed from his eyes, and, throwing up his head with a movement not unlike a restive horse, he hastened forward, like one well accustomed to the labyrinth of corridors.

First in one direction, then in another, he turned, until he saw at no great distance a light from beneath a door. This door he opened, and, stepping into the room, was for a moment dazzled by the blazing light. It was with a swift and cat-like tread, that he crossed this ante-room; then quickly pushing aside an arras, stepped into a large room, which was lighted from the ceiling by a cluster of candles which shed a rose tinted light around.

One swift glance had told Zeberos that he was alone. He hastened to a large table, standing under the cluster of candles, and, with one more rapid survey of the room, turned his attention eagerly to a leathern bound missal,

He Takes the Long Road

the margins of which were illuminated by one who well understood his art. Zeberos was so engrossed in his study, that he did not hear the stealthy step of one who apparently, by his dress and bearing, held great authority.

This high potentate was stern of visage, yet in his eyes lurked a smile at perceiving how unconscious the youth was of his presence. It was not until he called him by name that Zeberos gave a start of surprise, and, turning quickly, came face to face with him, who evidently was one to be feared. This man was of gigantic proportions; but more than this,—he held the power of life and death in his hand.

“Have you finished, Zeberos?”

“I await your pleasure, your Highness.”

With a gesture of command to Zeberos, he slowly dropped upon a richly covered divan; then, with a smile in his eyes which belied the sternness of his face, asked: “Are you happy here, Zeberos?”

“Is a bird in a cage? Is a falcon, so tethered that he cannot rise to his prey? Is a lion, so chained that he cannot gnaw his bonds? If either one or all of these are happy, then am I!”

Sojourners by the Wayside

The light, which had flashed up in Zeberos' eyes, died out; his face became colorless, and his attitude one of dejection.

"Well said, Zeberos! I find no fault with courage, even if it be expressed by a Jew."

Zeberos made no reply, unless the straightening up of his form and toss of his head—which bespoke defiance—could be taken as such. The manner of the high-priest changed; the smile left his eyes; his face became more stern, as with an outward gesture of his right hand, a gesture of command, he said:

"Zeberos: for three days and three nights you are to lie in the black hole, outstretched in the form of a cross, your head to the north, your feet to the south. For three days and three nights, no food shall pass your lips; neither shall you take even a drop of water. At the end of this time; if your spirit is not broken; if you have not made up your mind to deny your people; if you will not swear faith and allegiance to Thoth and Osiris for all eternity, then we will try what the cradle and the wheel can do. Begone!"

Zeberos turned on his heel and left the spacious apartment. Once more in the narrow

[80]

He Takes the Long Road

corridor, he walked with lagging step, his right hand pressed to his side under his white garment, and, now and then, a muttered word upon his lips. He wended his way through unlighted passages until he came to a long flight of stone steps, which, as he descended, seemed to carry him into the very bowels of the earth.

At the foot of the steps sat a dwarf, over whose head hung an oil lamp burning feebly. Taking down the lamp, he grinned horribly at Zeberos; then, with a clanking of keys, beckoned him to follow. All around was darkness, except where the lamp sent forth a glimmer of light. At last the dwarf stopped before a door and thrust a key into the lock, which, as it turned, made a rasping sound.

The narrow door swung heavily open, and foul odors assailed Zeberos' nostrils. By the dim light he caught sight of what looked like bleached bones, and, when the dwarf opened his mouth and gave forth a hideous sound, Zeberos saw that his tongue had been cut out. As the door closed with a creaking sound and the key turned in the lock, he heard the scuttling of swarms of rats. He waited until

Sojourners by the Wayside

the sound of the dwarf's retreating steps was lost in the distance; then he drew forth the lamp and flask of oil from beneath his robe.

Lighting the lamp and looking about, he saw the begrimed walls and low ceiling with a narrow slit, which gave a slight current of air to the cell. The room was small in size, making it impossible for him to lie in the form of a cross. Two skulls grinned at him, one from each corner of the room facing him; parts of two human skeletons were strewn about the floor, and, whichever way he turned, Zeberos could see phosphorescent sparks, which, as he became accustomed to the light, he knew to be the eyes of rats.

He sat down upon the stone steps, fully realizing the horror of his surroundings. Cold sweat oozed from every pore of his body. Reaching down into an inner pocket of his undergarment, he drew out a long dagger, being fully determined to sell his life dearly. For two days and two nights the terrible struggle between him and his four-legged foes is better left undescribed.

The third morning found him oblivious to his surroundings. Something touched him on

He Takes the Long Road

the top of his head and roused him suddenly. At the same time he became aware of a bright light flooding his cell. As he threw his hand up to his head, it struck a rope attached to which was a basin and a light. In the basin was food, and fastened to the rope was a scrap of paper on which was written:

"Have patience; I have just discovered where you are. Hold steadfast for another hour."—AARON.

When the key turned once more in the lock, Zeberos, who had thrown the food to the rats, was battling for his life with swarms of them on every side. Two strong arms reached down and lifted him out of his vile prison. The rescuer turned in the opposite direction from that which Zeberos had come, and, soon entering a lighted corridor, which he swiftly traversed, he thrust him through an open door into the arms of two men, who, in their turn, with swift feet, bore him to a house in the vicinity.

There the door opened like magic and Zeberos, still unconscious, was carried into a chamber, and laid upon a couch. There was but one occupant in the room; for the four men, at a wave of his hand, retired. This was

Sojourners by the Wayside

the man, Moses; while the rescuer was his brother, Aaron.

Moses was on the eve of his departure for the Promised Land with his people. History tells us how he had learned that he was not of royal lineage; how he had given up all pomp, position and riches; how he turned his back upon all that he had thought for years to be his heritage.

Before another dawn, Zeberos formed one of the party that started on the long journey through the wilderness. He was not thirty when he first reached Jerusalem. The days and years that had intervened were similar to those of all his people. He had left the presence of the high priest with hair black as night; he had been brought to Moses with the face of a prematurely old man, his head crowned with silvery white hair. Till past twenty, he had not been wholly himself; then, slowly and steadily, his limbs had recovered their strength; his brain its balance, and his heart its courage; but to him youth was a thing of the past.

At the age of thirty-five Zeberos, though unmarried, adopted a boy whose parents were

He Takes the Long Road

of his own race, and had taken the long pilgrimage to Jerusalem with him. Prior to their death, the parents had asked him to befriend their child; and, true to his sympathetic nature, he promised to be a father to him. He looked upon this as a sacred trust, deciding for the present to remain in Jerusalem. At eighteen the lad died, leaving Zeberos more a recluse than ever.

One evening, just at dusk, as he was strolling in the older portion of the city, he heard a cry for help. The cry aroused him from his sad musings, and, raising his head, he saw two ruffianly looking men endeavoring to force their attentions upon a lovely young girl. Zeberos hastened to her assistance, and, the ruffians—recognizing that he was a gentleman able to defend her, took to their heels.

Zeberos addressed her, saying: "I trust they have done you no harm?"

"O no! But I am so frightened!"

When Zeberos left her at her home, which was in the catacombs beneath Jerusalem, he had learned that her name was Alena; that she was of his own race, born in Egypt and brought by her aunt to her present home.

Sojourners by the Wayside

Frequent meetings between the two helped to assuage Zeberos' grief for his adopted son; and, later, a warmer feeling grew up between them. But, as though destiny held in its hand a still greater test of his fortitude, Alena, to whom he was soon to have been wedded, died after a few days of great suffering; and once more life seemed to hold nothing but sorrow.

Among Zeberos' acquaintances was a man somewhat older than himself, who was known to the poor of Jerusalem as Stephen,—a man anointed by Jehovah. This good priest, meeting him on the street one day, urged him to join his order. He had urged him to do this before, only to be refused. At last he realized, that the quick shudder, which always followed this suggestion, was caused by the memory of his frightful experience in Egypt.

Another day his friend, meeting him, said: "Come with me to the home of my cousin. She is a widow, talented, rich; and has no children. I am quite sure that you will be attracted to each other."

At first Zeberos demurred; then to please his friend, and because at heart he was so lonely, he went with him. Two years later,

He Takes the Long Road

Zeberos and the widow were married. A brother and sister of the wife made their home with them; and again beneath the same roof dwelt four who in a previous incarnation had been closely related.

Thus do we at times, unconsciously and under different surroundings, walk side by side with those whom we have known before. Treasured in the Universal Consciousness, are memories that can be evoked by him who, through Divine Guidance, has learned the way.

* * *

At sixty Zeberos was once more alone; his wife had passed on; her brother had chosen a military career; while the sister had married and settled near Galilee. Many, that were poor and suffering, called down blessings upon the heads of Stephen and his friend; for the two men passed many an hour in ameliorating the condition of those who were in need. Books contributed largely to Zeberos' happiness for the next five years; and he studied the sciences, as they were known at that period. Contemplating the stars, brought him his most peaceful hours.

Sojourners by the Wayside

Standing at his window, looking at the evening star, which chanced to be Venus, he heard, as if from a great distance, a voice calling. Memories, that had never died, were quickened by that voice; and, all unconsciously, he reached out his arms beseechingly; and, as he did so, his face became illumined by a smile of holy ecstasy. His friend, Stephen, entering, caught him in his arms and heard the last words that passed his lips: "Dearest Alena, I come!"

The smile was on his face to the last. The rich of Jerusalem, as well as the poor, did him honor; and all were deeply impressed by the love-light in his face and the majesty of its expression.

* * *

THROUGH REINCARNATION COMES ATONEMENT; ALSO FORGIVENESS. THROUGH THE WORKING OUT OF LIFE'S LESSONS, MAN COMES TO HIS DIVINE HERITAGE. STILL THE WAY IS LONG BEFORE THE ROUNDING OUT OF LIFE'S EXPERIENCES BRINGS ITS FRUITION. YET, HOW OTHERWISE EXPLAIN MANY THINGS THAT LIFE PRESENTS TO US, EVEN IN ONE INCARNATION,

He Takes the Long Road

UNLESS WE HAVE MORE THAN THE THREE
SCORE YEARS AND TEN ALLOTTED TO MAN IN
WHICH TO OUTGROW THE SENSE PLANE AND
UNFOLD INTO THAT WHICH, FROM THE VERY
BEGINNING, IS GOVERNED BY IMMUTABLE LAW?

CHAPTER VI

WHAT THE SEA CLAIMED

"O strong soul, by what shore
 Tarriest thou now? For that force,
 Surely, has not been left in vain;
 Somewhere, surely, afar,
 In the sounding labor-house vast
 Of being, is practised that strength,
 Zealous, beneficent, firm!"

Matthew Arnold.

HERMES.....	Hiram, or Sir Richard
ADONE.....	Captain Barron
JOHANNESA.....	Hiram's Father
CLION.....	The Black Mask
AFREEDA	Eloise
CLIONE	Rachel
LORETA.....	Mistress Barron
LORETA'S CHILD	Helen

WHAT THE SEA CLAIMED

ONE night, when the hour was late, there came to a fisherman's hut, near the harbor of Tyre, a man covered with a long cloak which fell from a high collar to his spurred heels. A black hat, with a long black feather, so hid the upper portion of his face, that the fisherman's wife said afterwards: "She ne'er could get a peep at him."

As the door was thrown open, he entered; and, in a few words, explained his errand. A large bag of gold passed from his hand to the fisherman; then with a curt word of warning, as he recrossed the threshold, he became lost in the darkness.

It was not only gold, that he left with the fisherfolk, but a babe, stark naked as he was born into the world. A piece of soft woollen cloth had been wrapped about the babe, gray in color, and, except the fineness and softness of its texture, it gave no hint as to the class of the parents of this boy child.

Sojourners by the Wayside

The good wife looked the child over; then said: "He is straight of limb, but has ugly lines in his forehead. I misdoubt me, if they will ever leave it,—more's the pity; for, if it were not for them, one would think that he might grow to be a comely lad. But what shall we say to the fisher folk when they ask whose child it is?"

"Say! good wife, say! What can we say?"

"Don't be stupid, Jake! We will have to trump up a bit of story. We will say, that an officer came from the ship, that has just entered the harbor, whose wife died giving the child birth; and we are to care for it till he returns from over sea."

"Well, good wife, that is as good a yarn as any; but what is its name?"

"Name? We will call it for King Hiram. He is a good man; and, if any asks you, you can just say, 'His name is Hiram Solomon.'"

"But why Hiram Solomon?"

"Don't make me call you stupid again, Jake! Ain't we sending off timber for that temple which that man Solomon is buildin'?"

* * *

What the Sea Claimed

Six years — six uneventful years — have passed since what has been shown to me in vision and by hearing,—through my call upon the Universal Memory,—has transpired. I feel, through the vibration of the Inner Voice, that this little waif holds the working out of an atonement, and that, whatsoever is presented to me will be the outgrowth of a previous incarnation.

I am told that he was born in luxury; that he came from a family which cared not how it hid its disgrace; cared not for the price that was paid; so long as the name of the child, and of the family from which he sprung, was never divulged.

Five held the secret of the birth; the father and the father's mother, the boy's mother, the leech, and the man to whom the child was intrusted. The latter, brother of the father, at the urgent instigation of his mother, took the child, and bore it to the fisher folk. He was the only one who knew where the child was housed; it was against his better judgment; for he did not give credence to the story told him, that the young girl, his brother's wife, was with

Sojourners by the Wayside

child by an officer of the king's household at the time she became a wife.

Hiram was tall for his age; he was strong; for most of his life was spent in scant clothing out of doors. Nothing delighted him more than the sea. Often, in the early morning, he put out with the man he called Uncle Jake in his fishing boat, returning later in the day with fish.

One of the fisherman's customers was a benevolent priest,—one of the sun-worshippers. Hiram liked to carry the fish to this priest, who always had a kind word, or some little gift, for him. One day Father Antonius asked him, if he would like to learn to read. At first Hiram did not know what he meant; but, when the priest explained, he was delighted.

The priest saw Jake a few days later, and, when the fisherman found that it would not cost him a penny, he consented to let Hiram go to him each day. Hiram was diligent; he did not object to studying; his brain seemed keen and alert; and the good father was astonished at the strides he made up the hill of learning.

Lettie, the priest's housekeeper, took a lively interest in Hiram; and she taught him neatness,

What the Sea Claimed

cleanliness; and with her own hands made him a suit of clothes, out of the cast off vestments of the priest. She trimmed and cut his hair; taught him simple table manners, and often said to the priest: "You can see he has gentle blood."

When Hiram returned to the squalid hut—not over-clean—with his new suit of clothes on, Jake exclaimed: "Tut, tut! You will soon be too proud to live with fisher folk!" But his wife said: "Go and take off those duds; and only wear them when you go to the priest's. What Jake and me gits for you is good enough."

Hiram went up to the loft where he slept, and, as he took off his new clothes, he cried; but, before he came down to the room below, the mark of tears was gone, and each new garment had been smoothly folded. The next morning, while Jake was down to the shore and his wife at the market wrangling with another fisher wife, Hiram flew around as fast as he could, removing the dust from table, chairs and floor in the lower room; then in the loft. The few cracked dishes were set up neatly on the shelf, and the litter, which was usually on the

[95]

Sojourners by the Wayside

floor in the corner, had been taken care of, when Jake's wife entered the door.

There she stood; hands on her hips; arms akimbo; staring about her in pleased surprise. As Hiram came down from the loft with his new suit on, ready to go to the priest's, he asked: "Do you like it?"

"Like what?"

"The way I have fixed the room."

"It looks well enough; but how long do you suppose it will look like this when Jake gits home?"

* * *

When I see Hiram again, he has grown to the age of twelve. The expression of his face has changed; the happy, boyish look has vanished; the dark eyes hold a questioning expression, as well as one of determination. The mouth droops at the corners, but shows no indication of weakness. He has grown tall and holds his head erect. At times there comes to his face a look of suffering, quickly followed by one of persistent effort to hide his feelings.

The good priest had died, after a short illness; but, in the seven years under his wise

[96]

What the Sea Claimed

instruction, Hiram learned much that books cannot teach. He loved the sea as much as ever; and he made up his mind to visit other countries,—and that at once.

The night before, he had told Jake and his wife, that he was going before the mast on a ship, laden with a rich cargo of spices, silks and velvets. Jake stormed; he had made plans in which Hiram was to share; and this idea of the boy had set up in his mind a determination as strong as Hiram's. With Jake, Hiram was to go to where money was made in deep-sea fishing. The time was, when Hiram would have jumped at the chance; but the education he had gained, the glimpses of foreign lands given him by the priest, had made him long, not only for a life upon the sea, but for a life above that of a fisherman.

* * *

The captain of the Vulture was sour and morose; his first officer sly and cruel. Hiram, the first time on board ship, was to learn what life before the mast could mean with such a captain and such an officer. New to large ships, and of what would be expected of him, half sea-sick with the roll and pitch of the ves-

Sojourners by the Wayside

sel, he made a misstep, as he started aloft, and came down with a heavy thud upon the deck.

Springing to his feet to make another attempt, he was unprepared for the cruel blow dealt him by the officer in command. Hiram's fighting blood was aroused; blood was streaming from his nose as he made a dead rush at his superior; only to be felled to the deck and then kicked into unconsciousness. How he got to the forecabin, he never knew.

It was night when he awoke; and, feeling a great thirst, attempted to get himself some water; but as his foot touched the boards, he swayed and fell, and, had it not been for a rough salt near him, must have lain where he had fallen. With rough, yet kindly voice, this man said to him, as he lifted him into his bunk: "If it is water you are wanting, lie still and I will git you some."

Hiram drank it greedily; then with the aid of the tar, he managed to wash the blood from his face, and soon was fast asleep. Joshua, the tar, muttered an oath between his teeth. He had been touched in a vulnerable spot when Hiram said: "Thank you." He remembered his own first days at sea, and made a vow, that,

What the Sea Claimed

whenever he could, he would befriend this boy.

It seemed to Hiram, that he had slept but a few moments when he was aroused, and, although his head was swimming, his legs trembling, he, with Spartan fortitude, went on deck. The fresh salt air revived him. His will gave him the strength with which to do. Throughout the morning he made no mistakes, and at noon he was ready for his dinner.

It was a week later, when he got himself into disgrace by accidentally stepping on the toes of the same officer, who had so brutally kicked him. This time the officer trumped up a story against Hiram; and, on the strength of it, the boy received twenty lashes with the cat on his bare back. Not satisfied with this cruelty, the lacerated skin was washed down with a bucket of salt water.

This punishment brought not even a groan from Hiram, so strong was his will and determination to keep from giving his tormentor the satisfaction of seeing him writhe in pain. His courage brought him in high favor, in the estimation of the crew. It was only Joshua who knew how terrible had been his suffering,—how he had nearly fainted on reaching the

Sojourners by the Wayside

forecastle. It was Joshua who bathed his back, and took from his kit old linen and a healing unguent and applied it to the torn flesh as tenderly as a woman. The sailors between themselves called him, "Hiram the Cockerel"; but in Joshua's thought came the name of King Hiram.

Two weeks from the time of which I have written, there came up a great storm. The ship was borne off her course; a great hole was torn in her side, by a jagged rock; she listed heavily; the captain swore by every oath in the calendar; all was hurry and bustle. Just as morning was dawning a cry came: "The breakers! The breakers!"

Hiram, who was aloft, saw, like writhing white arms, the breakers clutching at the ship; heard the sullen boom! boom! as they broke upon the reefs; felt the jar and the tremble as she struck. With rapid steps he reached the deck, just as the great mast, bent by the gale, snapped and fell, dragging by its weight and its rigging, two smaller masts, spars and sails. As another violent gust struck her, she careened, and Hiram, with others, was hurled into the breakers.

What the Sea Claimed

When he awoke to consciousness, the wind had lulled itself to sleep; the stars were shining brightly. He raised himself to his elbow, and looked around; but could see no signs of the ship. Near him lay the cruel officer, with a great bruise on the side of his face; he lay there stark and dead. Hiram attempted to move away; but, when he endeavored to get up on his feet, they gave way beneath him, and he fell with a groan on the sand.

Lying there, he wondered what was to become of him. This thought had scarcely taken birth, when he heard a familiar voice; it was Joshua's, saying: "Are you much hurt, my lad?"

"I cannot stand. It seems to me my leg is broken."

"That's a pity, but trust Joshua to mend it. I have been looking around a bit; and, as near as I can make out, you and me are on an island; and we is the only ones alive. Turn your head this way, while I do a little job of my own."

Hiram did as he was bidden. Soon he heard a great splash in the water; afterwards Joshua's voice saying: "It just suits me to be the one to give you this turn."

Sojourners by the Wayside

When Hiram looked again to where the officer had been lying, he was not there.

"What did you do that for, Joshua?"

"Did youse want carrion round here? Water's too clean a grave for him anyhow!"

* * *

Two months, Hiram and Joshua lived on this island, in the Mediterranean, without seeing a sail. It was a small island, with tall trees and thick underbrush. Had it not been for Joshua, Hiram must have suffered the tortures of thirst; but this was not the first time the old salt had been marooned; and, in searching for Hiram, he had discovered fresh water. He took Hiram's shirt, and tore it into bandages; made some improvised splints; then, after bathing the leg with salt water, he bound the splints to the leg, using soft sea-weed for padding.

The leg knit quickly, and, long before a sail appeared on the horizon, Hiram was walking about by means of a stick. It was Hiram, who first saw the sail; and Joshua ran up, as a signal, his own undergarment.

Fortunately it was seen. Three hours later they were sailing away on the *Falcon*.

What the Sea Claimed

In the forecastle they were looked upon as heroes. Hiram smiled, as he looked at Joshua and himself in the nondescript garments, given them from the ship's locker. The first officer was a far different man from the one on the *Vulture*. He at once took to Hiram, and it was due to his instruction, that, when the ship came to anchor, Hiram received favorable notice from the captain. Hiram, with his friend from the *Vulture*, sailed for seven years on the *Falcon*; during that time, he became acquainted with the captain's wife and daughter.

It was when he was twenty, that he made up his mind to stay on land for a year; and, during that period, he applied himself diligently, not only in storing his mind with useful knowledge, but in acquiring a certain finish, which made him acceptable in polite society.

Captain Barron used his influence, to such good purpose, that, at the age of twenty-two, Hiram sailed as master of a ship, having for his first officer, Rodney, the kind officer of the *Falcon*. Joshua, also, had come out from the forecastle, and sailed as second officer on board the *Arrow*. Hiram's ship was long of keel and

Sojourners by the Wayside

narrow of beam, built much as a clipper of later date.

When Hiram started out on his first voyage, as master, he left behind him three friends: one, his old captain's wife, Mistress Barron; the other two, young ladies of about the same age, the captain's daughter, Helen, and her cousin, Rachel.

Strange to relate, Hiram was to sail to Tyre, there to load with cedar and fir for Joppa, to be used in the building of King Solomon's temple. At first he thought he would not go to see the fisher folk; but as he wished to call on Lettie, the Priest's housekeeper, for whom he had a small gift, he decided that he would see his foster parents.

His voyage was a successful one; wind and weather were propitious. Lettie, at first, did not know him; he had so changed; but, when he smiled, she at once recognized the lad whom the priest had loved. His foster parents took great pride to themselves to think, that a boy of their rearing should be master of such a finely built ship as the *Arrow*. When he left them, he gave to each a piece of gold.

What the Sea Claimed

On the voyage to Joppa he had a chance to prove what a staunch ship the *Arrow* was. The owners, also, felt greater confidence in his nautical skill, when they heard of the great gale which he had weathered; for one of the owners had combatted the idea of putting so young and inexperienced a man as Hiram in command.

The second evening in Joppa, he spent at Captain Barron's home, where he received a hearty welcome. The Captain happened to be in port, and had with him his sister's son, John, who was about Hiram's age, and was acting as second officer on the Captain's vessel. When John saw the marked deference, which his cousin Helen paid to everything that Hiram said, an unpleasant expression came into his gray eyes, a surliness into his voice.

During the evening several young friends came in, among them a certain Peter and his sister. Peter was full of mischief; nothing delighted him more than to stir up Rachel, who was his cousin. She was bright and vivacious,—quite a belle in fact; but, although she knew the Captain's nephew quite well, she did not trust him. From the first she had taken a

Sojourners by the Wayside

strong liking to Hiram; but, thinking that her friend Helen, held a stronger feeling for the young sea captain, and, being not only a friend in name as well as in reality, she tried to keep herself in the background. Peter's sister had for John some such feeling as Helen held for Hiram; she was an heiress in her own right; but John had made up his mind to marry Helen, despite Mistress Barron, who did not believe in marriage between cousins.

When Hiram rose to say "Good night", the young people asked, if they could come on board the *Arrow* before she left port. Captain Barron did not wait for Hiram to reply but said: "Certainly you can go. Nothing makes a captain feel so good as the opportunity to show off his ship; but for a few days you will be in the way." It was left, that, one week from that day, they should all take dinner with Hiram in his own private cabin.

As the young captain strolled down to the ship, each of the young people, who had been present that evening, seemed to pass before him in mental review; and, then and there, he determined, that, when he should have something

What the Sea Claimed

worth while to offer, he would ask Helen to become his wife.

* * *

Thus far, both vision and hearing have given me what is here recorded; but now I begin to feel strong vibrations,—see shadows looming up,—feel strong pulsations as if of coming evil, and, through the Inner Voice, recognize that years will elapse before the fruition of Hiram's hope, if ever, will be realized.

* * *

Once again Hiram's destination was Tyre, and, with high hopes, he had left the port of Joppa. Two days out, a strange looking ship was sighted on the horizon. She stood high out of the water, hull, masts and sails, light gray in color. Like Hiram's ship, she was long of keel and narrow of beam, and, before nightfall, the man aloft had made out her name, *Avenger*. A broad black band encircled the ship, while on her brow she carried a skull and cross bones. Apparently she was following the same course as the *Arrow*. Joshua told Hiram that he had never heard of her in these waters; but that she was noted in the Aegean Sea, and, that her cap-

Sojourners by the Wayside

tain was called "The Black Mask", as no one had ever seen his face.

Rapidly, the sinister ship bore down upon them. Hiram endeavored to show her a clean pair of heels. Faster and still faster, the *Avenger* cleaved the water; and, as the stars came out, a crashing sound was heard, and a great stone fell, so near to the side of the *Arrow*, that it boded ill to the good ship. Hiram tried to give his opponent a reply in kind, but the *Avenger* tacked just in time to avoid it.

For an hour, one might call it a game of "hide and seek," with plenty of action. During that hour, neither ship seemed to suffer any serious damage. At last, a hurtled stone raked the *Arrow* from stem to stern; a second shot struck her abeam, and she careened and shivered like a living thing in torture. The *Avenger* came along side and threw grappling irons over the rail of the stricken ship.

Up from the hold of the *Avenger* came a horde of men with cutlasses in hand, who sprang aboard the doomed ship. Despite the gallant efforts of Hiram, his officers and crew, they were obliged to succumb to greater num-

What the Sea Claimed

bers; though not till the young captain had seen his first officer killed; two-thirds of his men laid low; his own face and shoulder slashed by a cutlass.

Joshua and himself, as well as the five men still alive, were hustled aboard the *Avenger*. The last of the barbarians, still living, returned with their prisoners; and soon only great eddies showed where the sea covered the *Arrow*.

All sail was set, and for three days Hiram and Joshua, with the remainder of the crew of the *Arrow*, were held in durance vile in the black hold of the *Avenger*, which swarmed with rats, and was filled with undescribable odors, so vile in their nature, that, even Hiram, strong as he was, felt that death would be preferable to such surroundings. The scant food, given to them to eat, was wormy; the water brackish and loathsome to the taste; Hiram's wounds smarted and burned, and, doubtless, the smell of fresh blood made the attacks of the rats still more terrible. Joshua and the seamen fought them as best they could, taking turns to snatch a little sleep.

A great storm arose and they were thrown
[109]

Sojourners by the Wayside

from side to side, bruised and battered. From above, they could hear the creaking of cordage, the rattling of halyards, the snapping of spars. On the second night, a great crash sounded above the howling of the storm, and they could hear the hurrying of feet, following shouted orders, frightful oaths, and, always, the voice of one man above all the others, stentorian, clear, incisive and—as Joshua said—devilish.

Late in the afternoon of the third day, the storm ceased, but the sea still ran high. The ship wallowed, veering at times to the right, to the left, as though she had lost her rudder. Hiram wondered, if it was to be his fate and that of his men, to go to the bottom without one more glimpse of blue sky,—one more breath of fresh air to fill their lungs. They had lost track of time; they knew not whether it was night or day; every breath was a torture. At last a light flashed into their dazzled eyes, and a guttural voice hailed them: “Avast there! If any of you be alive, you are to come to the captain,—and be lively!”

When they appeared in the captain’s cabin, each one of them was in such a plight, that it

What the Sea Claimed

should have softened a heart of stone. Hiram saw a man of gigantic stature, great breadth of shoulders, large feet and hands, hair bright red; and, over his face, a black mask. The eyes which peered from the slits were blood-shot. Hiram was quick to detect, in his voice and language, that, at some period of his life, he had been a man of culture and refinement. Before him was a table loaded with appetizing food; at his elbow a great beaker of wine.

"Why; you are but a boy; and captain of so good a ship as the *Arrow*! Had I dreamed that you were making your maiden voyage, I might have withheld my hand; but I count every reprisal from the owners of the *Arrow* as one more drop of honey in my cup of gall. Who is this man at your right,—is he a sailor or an officer?"

"An officer."

"Umph!" then striking a sharp blow upon the table, which made the dishes rattle, he said to the man who entered: "Take the seamen to the forecastle; see that they have fresh togs from the lockers; give them food; but remember—no talking! Send Howzer to me."

Sojourners by the Wayside

A short thick set man, with grizzly gray hair, red face and twinkling blue eyes, made his appearance.

"Howzer, this young man was the captain of the *Arrow*. Lodge him in the yellow state-room. He will have to let his man here, who, by the way, is his second officer, bunk in the same room with him. Make the captain comfortable." Turning to Hiram, he asked: "By the way—what is your name?"

There was a tone of bitterness in the young man's voice as he replied "I have no name. My foster parents—the fisher folk who took me, when I was a new born babe, from an officer—did not ask him who my parents were; later they gave me the name of Hiram Solomon,—two worthy kings. I shipped as Captain Hiram."

A grating laugh sounded from the black mask, and an oath. "Your face reminds me of some one whom I have known in the past." Then once more speaking to Howzer, the captain of the *Avenger* said: "Remember, Howzer; Captain Hiram receives every attention. He is to dine with me."

What the Sea Claimed

An expression of surprise flitted across Howzer's face, as he said: "I shall remember."

* * *

A month passed. More than once the ship attacked other ships, and, although Hiram and Joshua were at such times fastened into their state-room, their crew was furnished with cutlasses and obliged to take part in the melee. One day after a sanguinary encounter with a ship, almost twice their size, there were brought on board the Avenger, ten prisoners, as well as a large amount of gold, precious stones, spices, and bales of velvet, silk and embroideries.

The ten persons consisted of four women, one child and five men. Three of the latter, on the following day, were forced to walk the plank; the other two men were held for ransom. Three of the women were young, two of them beautiful. The oldest woman was held for ransom, as was the child.

Hiram met the four ladies and child, as well as the two men, on the third day, following the capture, and straightway fell in love with the dark-eyed maiden of about twenty. She was

Sojourners by the Wayside

tall and willowy of figure, graceful in her movements; and, although suffering from some great grief, she had a winning manner. She was not as handsome as her sister, who was a blonde,—still, there was something which appealed to the young captain from the first moment that he met her. The attraction seemed to be mutual.

The blonde was vivacious, and often made a dull hour seem the brighter for her presence. The third young lady, with dark eyes and hair, had a deep, thoughtful nature; while the child was the life of the party.

* * *

High in mid heaven the moon was sailing majestically, while the cobalt sky was thickly studded with stars. That afternoon Hiram had noted land on the lee quarter. Looking closely, he had seen a rocky coast, high and irregular; its base washed with breakers. Here and there, it looked, as if inlets or bays broke its continuity. He observed that they took soundings frequently, as they approached more closely to the shore, and that Howzer took the wheel.

What the Sea Claimed

"Hard a port! Hard a port!" came from the captain on the poop deck. "Steer to starboard! Steer to starboard! Four points off! Luff! luff!"

The first officer now took up the directions, which seemed to Hiram many. The young captain and Joshua realized that they were on a treacherous shore and that great skill, great dexterity, was needed to take the vessel safely to port. Hiram wondered where they were going. Even as this thought took birth, the ship rounded a sharp reef and entered, between two tall cliffs, a channel so narrow, that it seemed impossible not to strike upon jagged rocks that rose above the water.

Facing them was a precipitous cliff—smooth as the wall of a house,—so near that it seemed as if the bowsprit of the *Avenger* would be driven against it, when there came a sharp order from the captain "Luff! luff! and be quick about it!" and, like a mettlesome horse, she responded; and, as the passengers held their breath in fear, she turned into a beautiful bay where the water, mirroring the moon, shone like burnished silver. Great birds, startled by the unusual sound, spread their wings

Sojourners by the Wayside

of glistening plumage; and, from the land, came the bright light of a beacon fire and the sound of many voices, shouting a welcome.

Joshua, who was standing near Hiram, said: "This must be the so-called 'Land of Enchantment'—the home of 'The Black Mask.' No wonder it has never been discovered; few would dare to bring a ship in here by day light, much less at night."

* * *

I see, built of stone in the form of a castle, a building, two stories in height, with a large tower, from the top of which, one could look over land and sea for miles around. The rooms of this castle are large; furnished and decorated richly, though often incongruously.

For a week Hiram did not see any of his fellow passengers. He and Joshua, by order of the Captain, dined in their own rooms,—two having been assigned to them. On the eighth morning, following their arrival, the Captain sent for Hiram. He found him walking to and fro, still wearing his mask.

"Be seated. I have sent for you, as I wish you to answer a few questions regarding your-

What the Sea Claimed

self. When were you left with the fisher folk, and who were they? I do not ask from idle curiosity."

"It was twenty-two years ago, lacking five days, that a stranger, disguised by a long cloak, black hat and feather, knocked at the door of a fisher hut in Tyre. What he said to my foster parents, I do not know. I was only told, that he gave gold for my keep, promising some day to return for me. He never returned,—so said Jake and his wife,—my foster parents. When I was six years old, a good priest took a kindly interest in me. He taught me to read, to know right from wrong, and quickened in me the desire to be something more than a fisherman. His housekeeper, Lettie, taught me deportment, cleanliness, her idea of table manners, and, in many ways, was kind to me.

"When the priest died, I made up my mind to follow the sea. Jake wished me to go fishing with him. Instead, I went before the mast on the *Vulcan*. The first officer was cruel in the extreme. We were shipwrecked; Joshua, who had been very kind to me, and I were the only survivors. Captain Barron of the *Falcon* rescued us. I sailed under him until I was

Sojourners by the Wayside

twenty. It was through his influence, that I became master of the *Arrow*. I was outward bound for Tyre for the second time as master when you attacked us."

During Hiram's recital, the black mask was greatly agitated. When Hiram finished speaking, this ruthless man shook, as if with ague; his voice trembled as he said:

"I am the man who took you, as a babe, to the fisher folk. I suspected your identity the moment I first saw you in my cabin. At that time, I was an officer in King Hiram's service. I belonged to an ancient family of Tyre; my wife was your mother's sister. I was your father's brother. My mother was a proud, imperious woman, and an unjust one. My brother and I married beneath us, according to her ideas. She plotted to destroy our wives; she was the means of their death. The gross insults she heaped upon your mother, and the taking of you away, killed her. It not only killed your mother; but the falsehoods she told my wife, about both my brother and myself, made her forget our two children, our love for each other; and one night I found her dead,—dead by her own hand.

What the Sea Claimed

“For years I think I must have been insane. I left Tyre with my children; travelled for three years; then, when I learned that my brother was shut up in a mad-house by his own mother, something snapped in my brain. I bought a ship; I put my children in the care of a distant relative of my wife; and, up to a few weeks ago, I had not seen them since. I disguised myself with this hair and this mask; named my ship the *Avenger*,—you doubtless know the rest. Odele and Eloise are my daughters. I was to meet them at a certain place; instead, I found them on board the last ship that I sunk.

“I shall never sail on the *Avenger* again as her captain. When I make myself known to my daughters, I wish them to know me as a man of probity and position. Your father died six months ago; my mother also is dead. I shall give the ship to Howzer for faithful service. Three of your crew are living; I propose to put you safely on shore with Joshua and the remnant of your crew; and, with sufficient money, to buy a new ship and make a new start. You may do as you think best; when you get

Sojourners by the Wayside

your money from your father's estate in Tyre, you can pay it back or not.

"A year hence, if you still love my daughter, Eloise, and if you, knowing my story, wish to marry her, and she you, I will gladly give my consent; for I intend to settle in Tyre. I know the father of the brown-eyed maid, Pereza; also, that of the little child; I intend to pay the ransom to Howzer for the other three passengers, and set them at liberty one week from tonight. We are on the Barbary Coast. I know I can depend upon your honor not to speak of anything that I have told you. Before we part, I will give you the name you are entitled to; until then you will know me as the Captain of the *Avenger*, called 'The Black Mask.' "

* * *

Hiram, as Sir Richard, bade the Captain good-bye. He had asked to see Eloise, but the Captain had refused.

* * *

Into the harbor of Tyre, just as the sun was setting, came a fine looking ship, bearing the name of the *Reliance*. Two hours later, Sir

What the Sea Claimed

Richard, her master, stood waiting at the door of his uncle, Sir Rufus. He was evidently expected. Down the great baronial hall came its master, cordial and smiling. Sir Richard knew at once who he was, although he had never seen the face before. The hair, which he had known as red, was now iron gray; the eyes, no longer bloodshot, reminded him of the brown eyes of Eloise.

As they sat down to dinner, he thought of himself, the poor fisher-boy, whom the good priest had so befriended.

Six weeks afterward, there was a great wedding, when Sir Richard and Eloise were made man and wife. Peter, whom he had met at Captain Barron's, was present as the affianced husband of Adele. Through Peter, Sir Richard learned that Helen had married her cousin, John,—only to rue it; while Rachel, for some reason unknown to her friends, has remained single.

* * *

It is said that "history oft-times repeats itself." After ten years of happy married life, the *Reliance* put out to sea with Eloise on board. Joshua was acting as first officer. One

Sojourners by the Wayside

night, near the Pillars of Hercules, a great storm arose, and, before morning, the *Reliance*, captain, wife, officers and crew, had all passed from this existence into that which cometh to all.

IN THIS INCARNATION, THE ATONEMENT WAS MADE; AND, IN FUTURE INCARNATIONS, THE SEEDS, SOWN IN THIS, WILL NOT FAIL TO BRING FORTH A GOODLY HARVEST; FOR LIFE IS NOT A FORGETTING, BUT AN EVER ONWARD PROGRESSION; AND, WHAT WE FAIL TO ARRIVE AT IN ONE EXISTENCE, WE CAN PERFECT IN ANOTHER. THERE ARE NO BACKWARD STEPS IN THE UNFOLDING OF THE INDIVIDUAL ENTITY; BUT A CONSTANT ADVANCE.

CHAPTER VII

THE OUTCOME

"Men must reap the things they sow;
Force from force must ever flow."

SHELLEY.

HERMES	Ione
CLION.....	Ione's Son
ADONE.....	The Lord Chamberlain
AFREEDA	Alpha
CLIONE	Ula
LORETA	Reisa
LORETA'S CHILD	Edweig

THE OUTCOME

JUST out of Babylon, in the days of its greatest prosperity, lived a young man scarce eighteen. He was of the noble family, fair to look upon, manly in every respect, and, for the times, bore a character above reproach.

At his father's home he met with three maidens. One was dark of complexion, tall and willowy of figure, a month younger than himself. She was capable of greatness, but uncertain of disposition; jealousy was one of her most unpleasant characteristics. She also, was of a noble family. Her sister, who differed from her in almost every respect, was petite of figure, with long golden curls, eyes of sapphire blue, and a pure pink and white complexion. Her every movement was one of grace, and her mind was as richly stored as was that of Ione, the young man of whom I have spoken. The third maiden possessed a sweet and lovable disposition. She was fair to

Sojourners by the Wayside

behold, yet could not rival the two sisters; Alpha who, afterwards, became a priestess, and whose black eyes always held in their depths a command; nor Reisa, the fair sister. Still this brown-eyed maiden had a certain dignity, a tenderness of heart, a sympathetic nature for all who suffered; and, to her, Ione turned for consolation and advice. Alpha, from her earliest childhood, had felt an intense dislike for this cousin of hers, and, more than once, had stooped to try to discredit her with Ione.

It was a beautiful home, where the sisters dwelt, a palatial castle with hanging gardens, fountains, and marble steps leading to the water's edge. Out on the blue expanse, in a gaily painted sail-boat, the young people passed many a day of pleasure and delight. But, at night-fall, there was always a cloud on Alpha's face, after such a day, and a desire within her heart to engross Ione's entire attention; for, although the real evil traits of her nature did not appear until she became a priestess, she was even then selfish as well as proud.

The cousin had a mother who was very delicate, and much of her time she devoted to

The Outcome

this mother, pouring out her great wealth of love upon her. One day the mother sickened and died. It was then that Reisa came to her; but Alpha stood apart, and looked with scornful eye upon the many friends, who expressed deep sympathy for one who had shown a devotion, such as few daughters, at that period, felt for their parents.

Three years later, Ione, who had been made much of at the Court, and had mixed with flatterers and courtiers until his head was almost turned with the praise bestowed upon him, formed an attachment for a young maiden of the Court; then Alpha turned her disagreeable attentions away from her cousin, in her determination to uproot this new affection. For three months she plotted; for three months she flattered, and, at last, Ione ceased to pay his addresses to Rhudesa, who, however, had already formed a strong attachment for him.

One day, finding Alpha in the hanging gardens, he said to her:

"I fail to understand myself; I thought that I loved Rhudesa. Tell me, Alpha, by the love you bore me when we were children, what is it that has change me so?"

Sojourners by the Wayside

"Changed you, Ione? It was only a passing fancy; and, as for Rhudesa, did not you mark how she permitted the attentions of the Lord Chamberlain?"

"Of the Lord Chamberlain! Art thou not mistaken?"

"Not I!"

Ione left Babylon, and, after a season had passed, returned, as one of the train which accompanied the daughter of the great Cyrus, when she was sent under the care of Darius to see whether she might not find favor in the sight of Belshazzar. The second day after his return, he received a note from Alpha, now known as the Egyptian Priestess, and he, desirous of meeting with an old friend, hastened to pay his respects to her.

He found her surrounded by sycophants and by the "golden youth" of Babylon. As he looked upon her, he thought, "How regal is her beauty; how grand her presence; how caressing her smile!"

An hour passed, and then he arose to go; but Alpha made him an imperative gesture to remain. Soon he found himself alone in the

The Outcome

immense chamber; and, once more, he saw—not the Egyptian Priestess—but the friend of his childhood and early manhood. Together they strolled out into the moonlight, and she, in her sweetest manner, asked him, if he had seen Reisa, or called upon her cousin.

“No; but I intend to go tomorrow. Poor girl! I have often thought of her since her mother’s death. They were so devoted to each other. She gave promise—not of such beauty as yours—Alpha, but of a heart that a man could depend upon, were he desirous of giving a mother to his children.”

“That is true. Ula is a superior character, and, were it not for two grave faults, she would be all that a man could wish to rear his children and to develop within them pure and lofty thoughts. You have, perhaps, forgotten, Ione, how clever she was when we were children, in covering up her real nature, that of jealousy, which, after all, finds its root in envy. And then, more’s the pity, she is so miserly, and niggardly, except where giving will bring her a certain notoriety. When a child, this was not so noticeable; but now, instead of living and dressing as befits her station, or giving

[129]

Sojourners by the Wayside

quietly to the poor, you will see her name down at the head of any benefaction, especially if it be one liable to make her a favorite at the Court. She has even attached herself already to the daughter of Cyrus, when, even I, Priestess that I am, have not been able to get a word with her!"

"I think,—may I still call you Alpha when we are alone,—that you misjudge Ula."

"I misjudge! I who have the power to know the inmost thoughts, to see, as it were, behind that veil which covers so much! But we will not talk of her. Rather, tell me of your voyage and of whom you met. Tell me of the fair maidens whom you taught to love, of the court of Cyrus, of the great Darius,—anything in short which has helped to keep you from Babylon."

A year passed, and Ione, who, when he first returned to Babylon, had frequently called on Ula, had for the past three months scarcely seen her. Even Reisa and Rhudesa, now a happy mother, but rarely saw him. Alpha completely absorbed his attentions. He was envied by more than one gallant; but Alpha knew that it was not best to set the tongues of

The Outcome

Babylon against him. Therefore, all unknown to Ione, many an evening, within her favorite bowers, she passed in the company of those with whom it was no credit for a woman to be seen, much less a priestess.

A rumour came to Ione of these evenings, and one night, when they were together, he taxed her with that which had been told him. Alpha had heard only that afternoon of Ione's calling upon Ula; her jealousy spurred her on to cutting remarks. Ione was not to be intimidated nor placated. One week later, all Babylon knew that Ione, the wealthiest, the most-to-be-envied young man of the city, was to be united to the playmate of his childhood, Ula. Alpha was frantic with rage, and she swore a terrible oath, and recorded it in the temple of Bel. She made no effort to put any obstacle in the way of the nuptials, but boded her time.

Ione and his bride travelled for three years, and, during that period, he became a father. Their first child was a boy. A year after their return to Babylon, a girl child was born to them. The boy, when a child of five, died in a most mysterious manner. A slave was ac-

Sojourners by the Wayside

cused of poisoning the child,—accused by Alpha, the Priestess.

Ula, who had brought the slave with her from her old home, strove in vain to do away with this suspicion; but her efforts were useless. All that she could do was to lighten the sufferings of the slave, whose sentence had been a terrible death.

Alpha, then, worked upon Ione to such an extent, in ways best known to herself, that, when his little girl was seven years old, she was placed in the temple where the Egyptian Priestess reigned supreme. Ula's heart was almost broken; but still her love was so great for Ione, that she became convinced, against her better judgment, that he knew what was best for Edweig, their daughter.

For four years, she only saw her child in the presence of Alpha. Each time they met, her heart was torn afresh; for she saw that all, that was light and frivolous in Edweig's nature, had been fostered. Ione saw his daughter oftener, and her winsome ways and loving nature covered up the grave faults, which had been accentuated in her character.

The Outcome

More and more Ione visited the temple where Alpha ruled, not only as a priestess, but as a queen. Night after night he spent there in debauchery with men much younger than himself, until the finer part of his nature seemed blunted. At last his brain became imbued with the insidious poison which Alpha forever distilled; she rarely spoke of another woman in words of praise, but seemed to find her greatest pleasure in destroying their reputations. At this period her beauty was something marvelous. She had ripened into a majestic figure without grossness; her face could assume an expression of greatest purity; even the men, who had known her the most intimately, had not the question of a doubt but that each was the only one to whom she had given herself body and soul. Often she laughed in her sleeve to think how she had fooled them all. Ever she was animated by the one terrible desire,—to make Ione carry out to the full the oath which she had made in the temple of Bel.

One man, who had visited her often, to his complete ruination, but who, in his desire to hold her once more in his arms, was willing to do her bidding, no matter what the cost, she,

Sojourners by the Wayside

after due deliberation, decided should help her carry out her intentions. This same man, unknown to Ione, had already ruined Ula's daughter; but that did not satisfy Alpha, whose jealousy had so fed upon such evil passions, that nothing but the fulfillment of her oath would satisfy her.

Ula, sitting alone in her luxurious chamber, looking forth into the moonlighted garden, had been weeping. Her love for Ione was greater, if possible, than ever before. Memories of their childhood; of the three years of travel after their marriage; of the birth and of the death of their son; and of those days when they seemed to be bound closer and still closer together by their common sorrow, had brought these tears to her eyes; and she asked herself wherein she had failed to hold his love.

A great thirst parched her throat. She took the crystal goblet from the tray, and, half unconsciously, quaffed its contents to the dregs. Soon a languorous feeling came to her, and, throwing herself down upon her couch in her white robe with her hair falling over her shoulders, her arms thrown up on the pillow, she fell into a deep slumber. A shaft of moon-

The Outcome

light rested upon her face, and she looked, lying there, as though her spirit had already left her body.

- It was there that Alpha's tool, stealing into the room, saw her; it was then that the struggle, between the good and the evil in his nature, fought for supremacy. In Ula's face he had traced a resemblance to his mother; he had stepped back from the couch, feeling as though his presence polluted the very room. Then had come to him a picture of the first night, upon which he had been held in her thin silken draperies, in one of her bowers, strong with the pungent perfume, which Alpha, the Egyptian Priestess had always about her; and, as a man has a thirst for wine, his brain became intoxicated with the thought that, if he carried out her wishes, she again would be his.

Knowing that Ula had been drugged, he did not even unloosen his clothing; but, slightly disarranging her white robe, he listened until he heard Ione's step in the dressing room; then he made a pretence of carrying out Alpha's horrible design.

Sojourners by the Wayside

Ione, who, that evening had learned of the disgrace of his daughter, and who had been taunted by Alpha with the fact that his wife was untrue to him, had come with murder in his heart to her room. Blinded by his passion and by excess of drink, he saw what he thought proof positive. As he rushed to the couch, Storche rolled to the floor; and, without waiting for any further proof that he had been dishonored, Ione thrust a sharp stiletto into his wife's bare breast.

Was it his presence, or the stinging pain that woke her from her drugged sleep? What was it that gave her the instant consciousness of her husband's cruel deed? As Ione stooped to withdraw the stiletto, she threw her arms about his neck, saying:

"My love, my love, the time will come when we shall not be parted!"

The next morning Ione was found on the floor beside her couch, with the stiletto which had ended Ula's life in his own heart. Only Alpha and her tool knew how it had come to pass.

TRUTH MUST PREVAIL. IN THE WORKING
OUT OF THE PROBLEMS OF LIFE, ONE TASTES OF
[136]

The Outcome

GOOD AND, OF WHAT MAN CALLS, EVIL. BUT DOES EVIL EXIST? WHAT LOOKS LIKE EVIL IS BUT ANOTHER EXPERIENCE WHICH, AS WE ATONE FOR IT, EITHER DURING THE INCARNATION WHEN THE QUICKENING OF OUR ANIMAL INSTINCTS WAS RAMPANT, OR, IN SOME FUTURE INCARNATION, HELPS US TO ACQUIRE, IN THE SCHOOL OF EXPERIENCE, THAT WHICH BRINGS US NEARER TO THE LIFE CELESTIAL. HAVING ROUNDED OUT OUR CYCLES, WE GAIN AT LAST THAT FOR WHICH MAN WAS CREATED, THAT HE MIGHT MANIFEST HIS DIVINE CREATOR. THUS ON THE LONG ROAD WE MAKE WHAT SEEM HEINOUS ERRORS, ONLY TO FIND THAT THEY ARE BEACON LIGHTS WHICH LATER LIGHT THE PATH FOR OTHER WAYFARERS.

CHAPTER VIII

THE MASTERY

"He that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption ;
but he that soweth to the spirit shall of the the spirit reap life
everlasting."

St. Paul.

HERMES	Isseorous
ADONE	Omo
JOHANNESA	Bolievir
CLION	Vitenoro
AFREEDA	Verrita
CLIONE	Omo's Wife
LORETA.....	The Temptress

THE MASTERY

ON the banks of the great Nile lived a man with a child,—a boy. His wife, when this her first child was born, succumbed to the plague, which, at that time, overran the adjoining country. The boy, a fair-haired lad, with laughing blue eyes, expressive face and straight limbs, had a sunny disposition. His mother had been a Caucasian, while his father was an Egyptian. Their home spoke of comfort, and, though not luxurious, had an individual charm. The father was a man of much learning, and he took upon himself the instruction of his young son in the erudition of which he had so goodly a store. The boy was called Isseorous, while the father was more often addressed by the title of, Master, than by his name which was Bolievir.

* * *

I am seeing, in clear vision, the boy playing beside the river,—not the Nile, but a small tributary, which coursed sluggishly through

Sojourners by the Wayside

a portion of his father's estate. Near him is an older boy, almost a man grown,—a distant relative of Bolievir. Omo is unfortunate enough to be taciturn, and, at times, morose, which does not win him friends; still young Isseorous loves him with an abiding affection, and Omo returns this feeling with a dog-like fidelity.

* * *

I hear, as afar off, their voices, beside seeing them, and, as I see and hear, there comes a strong vibration from the Inner Voice, saying: "This incarnation will not only affect Isseorous; it being a turning point for him in all future incarnations; but in a measure it will assist in sowing seed for Omo. This seed will germinate and become a plant, with firm roots, on this plane of existence. Isseorous, after a victory won over self-will, through love and trust, quickens the plant, which has already grown in a previous incarnation, until the fragrant blossoms become ripened fruit. In later incarnations, this same plant will lift its head higher, leading others into the knowledge of their true selves.

To each individual is given, through
[140]

The Mastery

right thinking and right living, power to extend his aura, so that it will be felt by those who are near, as well as those who vibrate afar off. Yet, before this degree of unfoldment is attained, many more incarnations will have taken place; although this is a turning point for Isseorous."

* * *

Out on the river Nile I see the Master, his son and kinsman, sailing to where Cairo now stands. I see the great pyramids and the Sphinx. Isseorous is no longer a fair-haired boy of five, but a youth four times that age,—a comely youth, with a serious expression, coming and going in his blue eyes,—firmness and resolution marked in his chin. The mouth holds a smiling expression, as of yore; but, one can see, that he is contemplating some great step, which requires trust and due consideration, before being fully decided upon. He is, at least, six feet tall, and the muscles stand out under the polished skin, indicating great strength.

Omo still shows traces of taciturnity and moroseness; yet he has a face which expresses firm will and determination, though marred

Sojourners by the Wayside

somewhat by an habitual sneering expression about the lips, which are almost too full. He is not much over the Master's height, which is medium, his skin, brownish in shade, is clear, denoting pure living.

The object of this trip is to enable both young men to see somewhat beyond the environment of their country home; also, to aid them in arriving at some decision in regard to their future.

Isseorous' eyes dart hither and thither; nothing escapes his keen, comprehensive glances. Omo, a portion of the time, wears a supercilious smile, which, when observed by Isseorous, elicits some such remark as "Could you improve on that? What about it fails to please you, Master Thunder-Cloud?"

When they at last land, the two young men wander here and there, seeing and discussing the merits and demerits of that which catches their eyes.

One day, when out walking, the two youths encountered three veiled figures. The two, who walked side by side, they thought were young, while she, who followed, they took for a duenna, by her veil and general dress. As

The Mastery

they passed this group, the wind took rude hold of the veil of the maiden next to Isseorous, lifting it for only a second, but long enough for Isseorous to get a fleeting glimpse of a ravishing face and form. Two merry brown eyes laughed out at him; then the veil fell, covering her once more with its folds.

Isseorous' heart was like wax, and it took on its surface the impression of the face he had seen; then and there, he determined to find out who she was, and, whether a maid or wife. Later in the day, he related the incident to his father, who warned him as to the strictness of the laws concerning women. For once Isseorous wondered, if his father actually knew much about women, and, again, made up his mind to find out who the fair maid was; for he never doubted but that she was single—and, when found out, he would do his best to woo her. Omo listened to his rhapsodies, saying little, but looking unutterable things.

The following day the two young men walked in the same direction, and, strange as it may seem, met the three, as before. This time, not only did the veil which had blown up the day before, do so again, but, also, that

Sojourners by the Wayside

which covered the other young woman, who, though not such a beauty as the one with whom Isseorous had fallen in love at first sight, still was more than pretty. She was fair, and, seemingly, a trifle older than the brown-eyed maiden. Omo was almost as deeply impressed with the second face as was his kinsman with the one he had seen the day before.

Isseorous ventured to bow respectfully; but, it was then, that he had an opportunity to see that it would have been better to have followed his father's advice. The duenna shook her head violently, gesticulating all of the time. Isseorous pulled off his turban and attempted to appease her; but she would not be appeased.

On the third day, there were no young ladies; but, in their stead, an irate elderly man, and, with him, one much younger, who went up to Isseorous, and, speaking in a somewhat offensive manner, asked him, if he did not know that it was against the law to meet and speak to the opposite sex upon the street.

Isseorous assured them, that neither he nor his friend would think of speaking, and, there must be some mistake. The incident ended by Isseorous finding out the desired informa-

The Mastery

tion; that both of the young women were single; and, before the colloquy came to an end, he had told the elderly man, the father of the girls, his own name, and that of his father, knowing that the latter was much respected on account of his erudition.

The result was, that, on the following day, this elderly man called upon Bolievir; and Isseorous, who had not gone with Omo for their usual stroll, was present at the interview; and, by his winning ways, his respect, and the evident reverence he accorded his own father, so enlisted the regard of their visitor, Vitenoro, that, he was included in the invitation extended to his father by the latter, to dine at his palace-like abode. Omo was not invited to join them, doubtless because he was not present when the invitation was given.

The next day, father and son entered the home circle, where the two maidens sat closely veiled,—silent, except when addressed by their father. Still, even in this sanctuary, the three young people managed to convey to each other thoughts which were denied expression in words. Refreshments were served; then the Master and Isseorous took leave, the Master

Sojourners by the Wayside

extending an invitation to their host to see him often during their brief stay.

As Isseorous arose to go, he brushed close to the brown-eyed maid and slipped a piece of papyrus under her veil, unseen by anyone but her sister. On it was in Egyptian that, which translated into English, would say "I love you." Isseorous told Omo of his successful venture, and deplored that he had not been there, with his father and himself. Omo smiled an enigmatical smile, but said nothing.

Four weeks passed before Isseorous saw, even at a distance, his beloved, and, then, saw only a hand waving a veil at him when passing the large gardens; but he felt assured that it was the hand of one who was becoming a necessity to him.

One day he had a long and confidential talk with his father, after which Bolievir saw Vitenoro, and made formal proposal for his son. Two weeks later Bolievir received a favorable answer, and, for the first time Isseorous learned that Verrita was the name of her who was to become his wife.

In the mean time Omo had found a way to
[146]

The Mastery

see the sister, how, he did not divulge, even to Isseorous. He waited until Isseorous and Verrita were united, then he requested the Master to ask the hand of Verrita's sister for him. At first Bolievir hesitated; but, being importuned, did as Omo entreated him to do; and again, after two weeks, the answer was a consent.

It was the fourth week after Omo's nuptials, that the party set out on their travels. Isseorous had made his decision which was to return home, continue his studies under his father's tuition, and let the future decide for him what the future would bring.

Omo took his bride to his home, some hundred miles from his kinsman, and devoted his time to his estate, to his wife and to a family of children which grew up quickly around them.

Verrita presented Isseorous with a son; then several years passed by before another child was born to them,—another boy, but delicate in health. The life of this child was not long for this plane, and, before his fifth birthday, he had left his sorrowing parents for a home

Sojourners by the Wayside

where, from which later, he could return and work out his unfoldment.

Three years after the death of his child, Isseorous' father, having great money interests in lower Egypt, and, being somewhat feeble in health, asked his son to go there in his stead. Isseorous consented.

It was a bright morning, when he left his home, expecting to return after four months absence. The months became years, and, during that period, a great temptation came into Isseorous' life. He had found his father's affairs more complicated than he expected; often he longed for his home, his wife and child, and more than once partly decided to return.

Almost a year had passed; he was popular, and made many friends. One evening, he and a man of his acquaintance, met with a woman, standing high in her own class, not only for her beauty, which was striking, nor for her learning, which was far beyond the average of her sex, but for some mysterious influence which she wielded over both men and women.

Isseorous, from the very first, felt the charm

The Mastery

of her presence. Days, months passed, and she became a necessity to him. The business which had brought him there was neglected; every moment of the time that he could, in decency, give was spent in her company.

Three years passed, and, although in heart and thought he had been untrue to his wife, still, when tempted most, a certain influence, or power, which he could not explain, even to himself, kept him from accepting her advances. Pique, if no deeper feeling, had determined her to make him subject to her will. More than once he had drifted to the very edge, only to draw back; more than once, in his dreams, an angel visitant had warned him, chided him, entreated him to flee from the influence of this woman.

At last, torn by two opposing factions; the angel of his dreams; and the woman whose professions of love he knew to be insincere, and, yet which held him in a leash so strong, so overpowering that, even to himself, he seemed like a puppet, willing to do her will, without stamina to resist. "Shall I be a coward and flee?" he asked himself more than once; "Or

Sojourners by the Wayside

shall I wring victory out of defeat by telling her face to face, that I can and will rise above her seductive arts, and return to my home, there to ask for forgiveness?"

This he finally did, and in the telling, saw the real nature of the woman, even heard the serpent hiss, and wondered that he could have so long succumbed to her fascinations.

* * *

On his arrival home, he told his wife all, told her of his temptation, of his victory; and, she, being a woman, a pure and loving woman, forgave him.

* * *

Years passed by and his boy grew to be a man, and when the time came for Isseorous to enter into his new kingdom, he had a heart to heart talk with his son. The words he said then left their imprint on Venore throughout his entire life. Bolievir had long since passed into the life beyond.

Verrita's mourning for her husband was not "as one without hope"; for since Isseorous' victory over himself, and her forgiveness, love had been an abiding guest in their home;

The Mastery

therefore, she knew, that they would not be long parted.

* * *

THUS THE SEED, THAT HAD BEEN SOWN IN OTHER INCARNATIONS, THE PLANT WITH ITS BLOSSOM AND ITS FRUITAGE, HAD, IN THE HOUR OF GREAT TEMPTATION, PREVAILED. THUS, THROUGH THE VICTORY HE HAD WON OVER HIS SENSE NATURE, HAD LOVE BEEN BORN, SO DEEP, SO TRUE, SO PURE, THAT IT HAD RADIATED LOVE. IT HAD SENT FORTH ITS VIBRATIONS FAR BEYOND THE CONCEPT OF MAN. THUS EACH GOOD DEED, EACH PERFECT THOUGHT, TEACHES ITS LESSON, AND IS WRITTEN IN THE UNIVERSAL MEMORY AS PERFECTION.

CHAPTER IX

VERITAS

"Which way are my feet set?
Through infinite changes yet
Shall I go on,
Nearer and nearer drawn
To Thee,
God of eternity?
How shall the Human grow,
By changes fine and slow,
To Thy perfection from the life-dawn sought?
What is the highest thought?

Maurice Thompson.

HERMES	Orioco
ADONE	Theodosius
JOHANNESA	Marco
CLEON	The Rabbi
AFREEDA	Esther
CLIONE	Irene
LORETA	Olivia
LORETA'S CHILD	Veronica

VERITAS

A VOICE tells me that the city which I see before me is Alexandria,—Alexandria in the height of her prosperity. On the thoroughfares, I see representatives of all nationalities. I am shown the wonderful library; for this is before the great devastating fire, which burned to ashes the priceless manuscripts and missals it contained. I am, also, shown that wonderful light-house on the Isle of Pharos. I look upon the water and see its many ships, bespeaking great commerce; and I see standing in the doorway of a great warehouse, a man with silvery locks, yet with eyes as keen and black as they must have been in early youth. This man is conversing with a captain of one of the large ships. He listens attentively, and then says:

“You have done well. You say my son is at the house,—did he look better for this trip with thee? I could not spare him; yet, at one

Sojourners by the Wayside

time, I was much afraid that I should lose my heir; but the gods are good. Tomorrow at this time you will re-load,—until then, I shall see none but my son.”

* * *

Marco was of Greek extraction. He had come to Alexandria, a poor boy; he was now spoken of as, “the wealthy merchant, Marco.”

Reaching his palatial mansion, he was met on the threshold by his son, a boy of twelve. He strongly resembled his father, having the same keen black eyes, the same mark upon his forehead; only, where age had left its imprint, youth had stamped its seal upon face and form of the merchant’s son.

“You see, I am home again. It’s good to be at home; yet the Captain was good to me, and, after the first two days, I could eat with the best of them; but come! I have got something to show you! The Captain did not want me to buy it; but I felt sure that you would not care, and, besides, it was such a droll little thing.”

As he was speaking, he was hurrying towards his father’s private room; and Marco, hearing strange sounds, wondered what he

Veritas

would find; he was prepared for almost anything.

In the center of the room, on a large table, littered with private papers, was a diminutive monkey, surrounded by unmistakable evidences of mischief,—a great pool of black writing fluid streamed across the table, leaving black stains upon the greater part of his papers. Down one side of the monkey's face was a black streak; and, when, with a loud cry, Orioco rushed to the table, the little creature jumped down, and, with lightning rapidity, climbed to a high cornice, from which point of vantage, he looked down upon father and son with owl-like gravity.

Marco was naturally irascible; yet, withal, he had a strong vein of humor; and, despite the destruction of his papers, when he caught sight of his son's find, and saw the chagrin on Orioco's face, the humor of the situation struck him. His hearty laugh relieved his son, who exclaimed: "The beast! Had I known he was so mischievous, I would have locked him up. Who would have dreamed of his cutting up such a prank!"

* * *

Sojourners by the Wayside

Orioco took up his studies under tutors. His water trip had done wonders for him; as the months flew by, he grew in every way, to his father's great pride.

At the time of the great fire, the two, father and son, watched the great tongues of flame, the lurid lighting of the sky,—felt the excitement of the time; and, could Orioco have had his way, he would have been in the thick of it. This fire made a great impression upon his mind; he realized far beyond his age, how pleasing is wealth; how uncertain.

As he grew older, he proved a great disappointment to his father, who wished to train him in his own line of business. When he saw that his son's mind was bent on other things, he, at first, opposed his inclination; then, realizing to the full extent, that the same determination and will power which had made him a successful man in business, were just as marked in his own son, he waived the point; and Orioco turned his attention to philosophy and kindred subjects.

The education of the boy had been an academic one. He was fond of argument, and possessed clear reasoning faculties, his deduc-

[156]

Veritas

tions being logical in the extreme. He was fond of nature, and nothing suited him better than to study her moods. As he strode through the fields with his trusty friend, Peppo, he often talked to the tiny monkey, which had largely outgrown its mischievous ways, and listened, as though giving great weight to his young master's ideas. Orioco often declared, that his little companion knew far more than people gave him credit for; and, even after growing to man's estate, he was rarely seen without his favorite, averring, that his thoughts flowed more freely,—his conceptions of things ethical became more clear, when Peppo was with him. His friends considered it strange, yet put it down as an idiosyncrasy of genius.

Orioco became a well-known man in Alexandria and his influence over men older than himself, as well as those of his own age, became so marked, that any regret on Marco's part entirely vanished. The latter often said, when his son was not present:

"I was but a poor boy, without the advantages which my son has had; my family is an excellent one, but impoverished; my son

Sojourners by the Wayside

proves that blood will tell; and, if I am only spoken of as 'Marco the Merchant,' he, who is bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh, will leave a name,—a name which will go down the ages, if I mistake not.

* * *

Orioco was standing on one of the public squares, in a group of learned men, listening to postulates as to the relation of Mind, Soul and Body. Peppo, seated on his shoulder, wagged his head sapiently; at last, evidently dissatisfied that his master was not talking, he patted him on the head, at which some young men, standing near, laughed.

This attracted the attention of a tall, large man, evidently an Israelite, who said, turning to Orioco: "Perhaps our young friend will elucidate his opinions?"

Peppo straightened himself up and sat more firmly upon his master's shoulder. Orioco bowed deferentially to the great Rabbi, saying:

"After listening to your eloquent remarks and logical statements, it would seem almost presumptuous upon my part to advance anything which might be contradictory to the

Veritas

arguments to which I have been listening; and, especially, in view of your far greater opportunities for observation.

To me, Mind, Soul and Body represent three parts of the great whole, each being in a degree essential to the other two; while each has its own special work, which can only be perfected when one has learned the lessons taught.

"To me Mind is the Source, the Center, from which is derived all that is. Soul is essential to manifest Mind,—to express on the different planes of being, that which the Mind advances to the individual expression of itself. As Mind is the center, so Body is the outward form, or circumference, and has its work which is just as important, in its way, as is Soul.

"It is not only man, but all nature, which teaches us the lessons of growth. Through past ages on the physical plane, this growth has led to the apex—man. Man, touched into living fire by Soul, puts off the physical manifestation, and, eventually, returns to the Center. The length of time, the different gradations, all are dependent upon the desire to

Sojourners by the Wayside

slough off the outer chrysalis, and, like the butterfly, which symbolizes Immortality, become one of the tributaries of Mind which has returned to the Source."

"But, my young friend, in the first book of Holy Writ, we are distinctly told that God made man; and, later, 'Male and female created He them.' You are putting forth heresy, it seems to me; for, if He created them as we are told in the book of Genesis, how is it possible that he has to climb from the lowest form to become what you designate as the apex-man? Again we are told, that one only returns to God when, after having lived a certain number of years, he has proved himself worthy, by precept and example, to be accepted into the Kingdom. You make time and space as nothing in God's great plan; but only recognize, that he starts from one central point, to eventually return to that point, dependent alone upon his own desire to arrive at this given destination.

"What have you to say as to the judgment day; or, to our friend here, as to the resurrection; or to my learned brother here, as to those who will receive endless punishment?

Veritas

It would seem to me in your conception of Mind, Soul and Body, that you have lost sight of everything, almost, which we might term fundamental; and have left wholly to the finite to decide the immutable law of the Infinite.

"I must own to being interested in your manner of stating your case, even while I thoroughly differ with your hypothesis. Later, I shall hope to meet you in debate on this same subject, that I may prove to you the fallacy of your conclusions."

* * *

It was a month after this discussion, on the square, that Orioco received a polite note from the great Rabbi, asking him, if it would be agreeable to meet him on the tenth of the month in public debate in the large hall of the university, there to take up the subject, already discussed between them. In this note, he said, that he would see to it that the debate would be open to the public.

Orioco accepted the invitation, and, on the appointed evening, he, with his father and Peppo, entered the great hall with a feeling of calm assurance of success. It was a memorable evening, and the minds of those present,

Sojourners by the Wayside

which were not bound by tradition and prejudice, felt assured that the young professor had the best of the debate.

From this time on, invitations fairly showered upon Orioco; and, had he chosen, he would have been feted and dined in the best houses of Alexandria.

One evening, he was entertained at the house of a worthy matron, who was herself a clear thinker, and whose home lent distinction to the guests who were invited to cross its threshold. There, in the weeks that followed, Orioco enlarged his circle of acquaintances and made many friends, among whom were a brother and sister, both of fair complexion, both wealthy, and who became much attached to him and he to them.

Irene was always studying the "whys and wherefores" of things. The brother was fond of horses and sports of all kinds; he had a light-hearted, sympathetic nature, which, while good in its way, often, as in his case, begets trouble for its owner. Wine and women came near to being his undoing; but the influence of Orioco, by degrees, brought

Veritas

a change in Theodosius' way of living, eliciting a life-long gratitude in Irene.

Olivia, the worthy matron, who had introduced Irene and her brother to Orioco, cordially thanked the young professor for his influence over her nephew; and, later, in a conversation with Irene, expressed herself with such warmth of commendation as to the young scholar's fearlessness of character, his straightforwardness, his learning and his personal appearance, that it implanted the first seed of affection in her heart.

That same afternoon Theodosius had taken Orioco to call upon a young lady near his own age. Veronica was stately, with dark hair and eyes,—almost black. She had a wonderful voice, a high soprano. Theodosius asked her to sing, and, as Orioco listened to her superb voice, he seemed to be carried outside of himself,—his thoughts to be led to great truths, as yet not fully accepted by his intellect.

Again she sang, and this time he experienced a sensation entirely new to him. Trying to define it afterward, he could not convince himself, that it was for good: still it had certainly opened for him vistas, for which

Sojourners by the Wayside

he had been seeking blindly, solving some questions which he had been asking himself over and over; and he felt glad, when she gave him an urgent invitation to call again.

The following week, he availed himself of this invitation; this time going alone. He found, that she had a brilliant mind, and was able to converse fluently on every subject he broached. They spoke of Theodosius and Irene,—of the aunt, Olivia, and, when he asked her, if she would sing for him, she complied, singing a love song which she said her grandmother taught her.

Once again, Orioco felt the strange sensations, which he had experienced at the time of their first meeting; only this time they were intensified; for, while he enjoyed her singing which seemed to lift him into a sphere beyond that of the mortal, he also felt a quickening and an awakening of his lower nature; and something seemed to warn him of evil.

Again she cordially invited him to call, and he, not understanding why, in her presence, two diverse influences should take possession of his mind, determined, against his better judgment, to suggest, that he see her one week

Veritas

from that day. In the mean time, sleeping or waking, she held dominion over his thoughts.

* * *

Thus far, by vision and by hearing, this has come to me. The vibrations, I am now experiencing, warns me, that it is a turning point, which only the Inner Voice can give me. Tracing through the labyrinth of vision, hearing and vibration, I find that I am facing that strange contradiction of good and ill, which is, alone, met with and overcome through, the determination to follow the oracle of Thebes which said: "Know thyself."

One often asks the question: "How is this possible?" and the answer, which comes to one is: "Seek and ye shall find: strive to gain that perfect understanding, which alone can bring you to that spiritual consciousness, which crosses the threshold of intuition, and leads you to the Holy of Holies."

* * *

When Orioco entered Veronica's presence, he saw at once, that something had disturbed her; the white brow was puckered; the glance with which she met him was somewhat dis-

Sojourners by the Wayside

traught. He made no comment, yet, nevertheless, wondered as to the cause. Soon this was revealed to him; for he was scarcely seated before Theodosius, whom he had not seen since their chariot ride, put in appearance.

The two men greeted each other cordially. Theodosius looked at Veronica with a searching expression in his eyes, to which she gave no heed. Again Theodosius asked her to sing, and again Orioco felt the strange sensations; only this time, in addition, he felt an almost uncontrollable anger with Theodosius that he should have interrupted their pleasant afternoon.

When Theodosius arose to go, he waited, as though he expected Orioco to do likewise; but the latter had decided to remain a while longer, hoping to discover the meaning of his strange feelings. With lingering step, Theodosius left the room, Veronica following. Orioco heard a whispered conversation; then Theodosius' step outside, and, soon, Veronica re-entered smilingly.

That evening Orioco went to the house of Olivia, where he was to dine. During the

Veritas

dinner he spoke of Veronica's singing, of her beauty, of her brilliant conversation.

Irene, glancing at her brother, said: "I presume it was through you, Theodosius, that Orioco became acquainted with Veronica?"

"Yes: and what of it?"

"What of it, Theodosius!" said Olivia, "I am surprised that you should have taken our friend to Veronica's house! She is all he says, beautiful, accomplished, and has a magnificent voice; but did you tell him how lacking in principle she is? I had hoped you had gotten over your infatuation for her. I do not like to speak in a derogatory manner of one of my own sex; neither do I think it honorable, on the part of my nephew, to introduce him as a personal friend to a woman of such an unsavory reputation."

Theodosius arose abruptly from the table, and, with a curt "Excuse me," left the room.

"O Aunt, how could you!" exclaimed Irene.

"How could I!" How dared he to take one of my friends to the house of Veronica! Then, turning to Orioco, she said: "Pray excuse my bringing up so unpleasant a subject; but she was the cause of the death of my only

Sojourners by the Wayside

son, who succumbed to her wiles; and I cannot forgive her."

The warning had come, almost too late, to Orioco. Evidently his good angel had protected him. When he came to think seriously of the sensations he had experienced, he realized, that those whom he loved, and who had passed on before, had warned him of his peril; for the one thing, above all others, which he prized in woman, was purity.

During the two months which followed, Veronica wrote him several notes, urging him to call. These he destroyed unanswered.

Five months passed before he met Theodosius, who had been away from Alexandria. On his return, he brought with him a bride. In a private conversation with Orioco, he apologized, and Orioco replied:

"Where no wrong was intended upon your part, there is no need for an apology. Your sister, doubtless, has told you, that she has, with your aunt's approval, consented to be my wife?"

"No: she has never forgiven me for taking you to Veronica's; but I am glad that you are

Veritas

to be my brother. I have a favor to ask of you: Aunt Olivia and Irene are at my villa; I wish you to meet Esther, my wife; so prepare; for I can hear the horses champing at the bit; and we will make a happy family group."

Orioco was much pleased with Theodosius' bride. She was brown-skinned, brown-eyed, petite; and had such winning ways, that he did not wonder at his friend's choice.

When Irene and Orioco were wedded, his father gave them a magnificent home. Strange to relate, Peppo was not jealous of the bride, but adopted her as he had his master so many years before.

* * *

During the next five years, Orioco's fame in the field of learning attracted much attention. He had three children; the first, a boy, named for his grandfather; the second, a girl, named for her mother; while the third child bore the name, Olivia.

When Orioco was in his fifty-ninth year, he met with a terrible accident, which injured his spine. For the next five years, he was a great sufferer. When able, he devoted his

Sojourners by the Wayside

time to the education of his children. At sixty-eight, life on the material plane had ended for him.

His whole life had been an example of the precepts, which he had taught. His friends were many, and, as his father had prophesied years ago, he left behind him a name, well known in history; but, best of all, an example, which left its imprint on his children and his children's children.

CHAPTER X

FOR VICTORY

"Death has no power th' immortal soul to slay,
That when its present body turns to clay,
Seeks a fresh home, and, with unlesened light,
Inspires another frame with life and light.
So I myself, (well I the past recall),
When the fierce Greeks begirt Troy's holy wall,
Was brave Euphorbus; and, in conflict drear,
Poured forth my blood beneath Atrides' spear.
The shield this arm did bear I lately saw
In Juno's shrine, a trophy of that war."

Pythagoras, in Dryden's Ovid.

HERMES	Dono
JOHANNESA	General Dono
ADONE	The Old Soldier
AFREEDA	Fenore
CLIONE	Thetia
LORETA'S CHILD	Oneita

FOR VICTORY

CENTURIES ago, in the land of Thibet, lived a general known as "Dono the Invincible." He was the last of his race. Springing from a family of great antiquity, he had reached middle age before he thought of such a thing as marriage; then, desirous of perpetuating the family name; and, wishing to give to his children, should he be blessed with any, healthy bodies, he decided to marry into the class beneath him,—the middle class.

Looking about him, he saw a maiden; not what the world would term beautiful, but sensible, comely of face, hair and eyes brown, stature above medium. The impression given him was, that in her he would find a mother to rear him a son, giving health of body and steadfastness of purpose; as to the rest, he felt himself fully qualified to deal. Seeking the father of Onetia, he asked her in marriage, to which the father willingly consented.

Sojourners by the Wayside

Two years passed by, and only five times, during that period, could the general be at home with his wife. The last time, she gave him what he so earnestly desired, even more, for she presented him with twins. The first born was a male, who came into the world with fists doubled up, seeing which the foster mother said: "He will fight his way through." To the girl, the father paid but little attention, until she at one time performed such an heroic act, that it stirred in him, not only his love but his pride, that she was his daughter. Onetia was permitted to have the girl child to herself.

The boy was christened with his father's name, and, except when he was suckled, he was, after the first month, left entirely in the care of an old soldier,—one who had been with the General in many wars, and who had taught him every trick at arms that he knew. The General, even at this early date, was planning a great military career for his son; and was impatient for the time to come when his training could begin.

Dono—for this was his name—had his first lesson on his fourth birthday; the General

[174]

The Victory

himself began to teach him to ride. The lad possessed two traits, in common with his mother, a sunny, lighthearted disposition, and a steadfastness of purpose, when his mind was once made up. He had never known a day of illness, was large for his age, and his laughing blue eyes drew all of his house to him.

Dono became a horseman of no mean merit. The General had a spear made especially for his son, weight and size most suitable. The old soldier taught him how to stand, to balance, to cast the spear straight to the mark, whether on foot or horseback.

At ten years of age, he had not only acquired the skill of that period in the use of arms; but had shown prowess in the field; and, already, he was spoken of as the "General's Reliable." At fifteen, he rode by his father's side to rescue a noble family, which was besieged; and he fought so valiantly that, young as he was, he was spoken of, by all the surrounding nobles, as one who would do great deeds, and, like his father, be invincible. The General looked upon him with pride,—almost with idolatry.

For ten years, Dono received instructions from holy men in what were called, sciences,

Sojourners by the Wayside

at that date; from master artisans, the method of shoeing a horse, repairing a suit of mail, and everything, in short, pertaining to war.

Secretly, Dono had taken lessons in music with his sister, and written some verse. The General would have thought this a weakness in his nature, and would never have given his consent. Onetia was, however, a wise woman,—wise for her day and generation. She knew better than to deny Dono this outlet for his poetic nature; and she, also wished to have some part in the education of her boy. She was determined, that the brother and sister should balance each other. The twins were opposites, in many respects: the boy had his mother's color, hair and eyes; his father's physique and indomitable courage. Thetia had black hair and eyes like her father; inclined to be silent and meditative; was thoughtful for the comfort of others; though, at times, when with her brother, the spontaneity of youth made her almost recklessly gay.

Onetia quietly took lessons in everything that related to each of her children; and her determination conquered many difficulties.

The Victory

She even went out of the home-field of usefulness; and the old soldier, secretly, taught her the use of arms, as he taught his young master. She, in her turn, drilled Thetia in this skill, as well as instructing her how to spin, to ply the needle; and watching with great pleasure her daughter's studies in art.

When Dono was twenty, his father met with a serious injury. Their own castle had been besieged, while he and Dono were many miles away. Onetia, for the first time in her life, was prostrated by illness. The old soldier was bedridden. The men-at-arms, in the castle, were but few. It was then that Thetia's quick wit, and the training her mother had given her, came to the surface. The men-at-arms revered her as something from another world; every order that she gave received prompt attention. Her courage, her endurance through the three anxious days, during which the great masses swarmed around the outer wall, made their chieftain, who was determined to possess her, furious to think that this slight, graceful girl could keep him in check.

Sojourners by the Wayside

All around the sally-ports, piles of wood and brush had been heaped by the enemy, ready for lighting. A large wooden tower, built very high, had been reared on a movable platform, so that, through the loop holes, fiery torches could be thrown over the walls. So great was the excitement outside the castle walls, so sure of success were the chieftain and his followers, that they had not kept track of what was going on at their rear. Even the outer sentries had drawn near to the main body, and no warning came of the approach of the two "invincibles" with their followers, who were but a handful in comparison to the besieging force. Thetia herself was not aware of the relief swiftly approaching.

Over the sally-ports, huge rocks had been piled, and three men left, at each, to act when the signal should be given. In the small towers, at the corners of the castle, were stacked resinous torches; and, in the center of each tower, was a tripod filled with hot coals. There was but ten feet between the outer and inner walls; the huge rocks were to be dropped upon the heads of those who might seek to set fire to the strong oak doors of the sally-ports;

The Victory

in each tower were six men to light the torches, and pass them out to the men whose duty it was to keep the foe from climbing the outer wall.

Rocks were falling; heads were being crushed beneath; blazing torches were thrust into the faces of the foe, as they climbed to the top of the wall. Thetia was here, there and everywhere, directing, encouraging, holding, as it were, a charmed life. Her comb had fallen from her hair; its long tresses floated about her; their very blackness intensifying the courageous expression of her face.

Dono, who rode ahead of his father in his eagerness, also, being better mounted, was the first to catch sight of his sister. The great movable tower of the enemy, lighted by innumerable torches, the bearers of which had been told that they were not on any account to injure a hair of the young chatelaine's head, had already caused the death of more than one castle retainer. Every available person, within the castle walls, men-servants and maid-servants, as well as the men-at-arms, were doing their best to aid their young mistress.

Sojourners by the Wayside

At last some of the outer buildings were set on fire by the torches of the assailants; and more than one spear found the head of a retainer. Two of the ribbed oaken doors had yielded to the flames built beneath them. Filled with unfaltering heroism, Thetia had encouraged the men; telling them to die, if needs be; but to die fighting. The chieftain was confident, that he would possess what he had long desired. Even the stoutest hearts of the bravest fighters within the walls felt, as they drew near to their posts, that the castle was doomed.

It was then, that Dono, no longer resisting his desire, shouted with a loud voice, heard above the din of battle, his father's war-cry: "Victory! for Victory!" Every one of their band shouted in unison with the General, as he repeated "Victory! for Victory!"

On they came, a paltry handful of two hundred men; but their war-cry, known to be that of the "Invincibles," halted more than one uplifted hand with torch or spear: made more than one strong heart quake, when they realized who was the foe, attacking them on flank and rear at the same time.

The Victory

An answering shout went up from the castle. The chieftain tried to rally his frightened horde of followers. Dono's voice again rang out: "Victory! for Victory!" and, striking right and left with battle-axe, he cleaved his way, and actually drove his horse through the burning door of the north sally-port.

A great cry went up from the foe, "Look! look! The Fire God protects him!"

This was enough, and, like frightened sheep, torch, spear and battle-axe thrown upon the ground, they fled, often killing each other in their mad fear. The chieftain, evidently the better to see, cast up his helmet; but, in the act of shaking his battle-axe, in menace, at Thetia, she, with steady hand, cast the spear which she held, the point of which struck the infuriated man between the eyes; and he fell from his great black horse to the ground.

It was Dono's arm that was thrown about her waist; it was Dono's voice that rang out, reaching the General's ear: "It is Thetia, our Thetia! Victory!"

* * *

The General retired to his castle, leaving the honor of the family in the hands of his son,
[181]

Sojourners by the Wayside .

Dono. In the five years which elapsed before Dono and Thetia were married: Dono to a lovely girl of the same class as his mother; Thetia to a noble of the Court, the General had so learned to love his daughter, that he could hardly spare her from his sight.

The mother lived for two years after the castle was besieged; then, one morning, was found dead in her bed. The fond daughter mourned her with an almost inconsolable grief. The General revered his wife's memory, for she had been an essential element in his life, and he was grateful that she had given him such a son and such a daughter.

Fenore, wife of Dono, had Italian blood in her veins; she was vivacious; Dono thought her adorable. They had but one child, Veritus—after they had been married five years. Dono brought his son up as his own father had reared him; but, instead of depending upon his wife for the lessons his mother had inculcated in him, he turned to his sister Thetia, who had not given an heir to her husband.

Dono outlived his father twenty years. The last fifteen years of his life, he spent in travel,
[182]

The Victory

and his son took his place on the field of battle. Dono outlived his wife, loving her to the very last, always seeing in the wayward traits of her character, and elusive attractiveness,—something to admire, to love, and never to blame.

Thetia, then a widow, lived the last five years of her life with her brother, traveling with him and enjoying to the full the places of their sojourn. They were not long separated: he died one morning after a short illness, in the castle which had shielded him as a boy; in the afternoon, Thetia, seemingly as well as usual, retired to her room, where, later, her maid, going to see, if she was needed, found her, as she thought, asleep. She was sleeping her last sleep in the bed in which her mother had died.

VICTORY, WHICH IS THE OUTGROWTH OF PHYSICAL DESIRE, AND IS EXPRESSED BY PHYSICAL COURAGE, TEACHES ITS OWN LESSON OF STRENGTH; BUT, THE VICTORY, WHICH LIFTS US ABOVE THE PHYSICAL, IS THAT WHICH WE LEARN OUT OF SPECIAL INCARNATIONS. THIS LEADS US AT LAST TO WHERE THE SPIRIT CAN SAY: "VICTORY FOR VICTORY!"

CHAPTER XI

THE PROPHECY OF THE STARS

"I am the drift of a thousand tides,
The captive of destiny;
The weight of all darkness upon me abides,
But it cannot bury me."

Victor Hugo.

HERMES.....	The Great Count
ADONE	Disca
JOHANNESA	Attila
CLION.....	The Captain
AFREEDA	Hilda
CLIONE.....	Countess Alicia
LORETA	Elver
LORETA'S CHILD.....	Madame Dur Soresque

THE PROPHECY OF THE STARS

IN the days of Attila, King of the Huns, (also called the Scourge of God), a woman attached to his camp, yet of noble birth, was given in charge, twins—boys of about four years of age.

One had fair hair, blue eyes; was strong of limb and large for his age, in nature, bold and fearless and of dauntless spirit. His brother was pale and delicate; fully as large, but not so robust in appearance. His hair was black and that which gave a mystical expression to his eyes was their shape and extreme paleness of color and sallow outlines; yet there was a fierceness and energy which at times seemed to contradict the somewhat dreamy nature of the child.

No one but Attila knew the parentage of these children. All that seemed to be known was that after a very successful raid the children had been brought to Madame Dur Soresque and left in her care.

Sojourners by the Wayside

Brought in the night by Attila himself on the back of his great war-horse, these were the instructions he gave:

“See to it, for a year and six months, that everything is done to bring out the strongest traits in the character of each. This fair-haired boy, you may call, Disca; his brother is to be called, Elver. He is not strong; therefore, it is my will, that he be plunged in cold water on rising, rubbed with this unguent, which is to be applied by a strong young man. The same treatment may be given to Disca, if he does not resent it. A liberal recompense will be yours for their uprearing. If one asks ‘whose children are these?’ you can answer, ‘my nephews.’ You need not be ashamed to own them of your stock; for the stars have foretold that in the future Disca will be mighty in battle, a staunch friend, but a relentless foe; but Elver will lead his people by the eloquence of his tongue, and by an inner sense of which I know but little. If you are asked how or whence came they, say: ‘by a trusty messenger’. Never allude to me as being the one who brought them. In a year’s time they will have forgotten me. The one who has had them in

[186]

The Prophecy of the Stars

charge, since birth, is no longer able to care for them. What I desire is faithfulness in the carrying out of my instructions, and secrecy as to my interest in them."

Sixteen months passed; the boys grew apace. Every night Madame Dur Soresque jotted down her impressions, the result of her observations, in a great book. She recorded what they had eaten; what had most amused them; what special traits had seemed to gather strength and purpose. With the dawn Elver had his plunge in the cold water, and external application of the unguent; the bath Disca desired, but utterly refused the unguent.

At last the day arrived, when she was to give up her stewardship, was once again to see Attila; and it was with sadness of heart, that she thought of parting with the two boys she had learned to love.

* * *

"What sayest thou, woman: that Disca is fearless, is brave, but tyrannical? that he is sound in heart and limb, has great endurance, can ride like the wind, is keen of sight, and bids fair to do great prowess? That is well! But what of Elver? Is he grown strong and fear-

Sojourners by the Wayside

less and brave; or is he squeamish, like a woman? Does he shrink at the cold plunge, at the break-neck pace of the horse he bestrides? Has he a steady hand, a keen eye? Can he wing a bird in its flight? Why answerest thou not,—has he some trait that thou dost fear to speak of?"

"He is as courageous, as brave, though not as strong, as his brother; yet, what he lacks in strength of body, he makes up in strength of will, of endurance. He hates not the cold plunge; he is supple of limb, supple of hand and keen of eye,—still; there is something about him which I do not understand. He keeps a parchment beside his bed, such as the monks use. In the morning it is often covered with strange marks: at times with pictures of places, and men whom he has never seen. In all, except this, I have found him truthful; but, when I have asked him at what hour of the night or of the morning he puts these things down; he denies that it is done by his hand; and, when I have taxed him with deceit, he has sworn, even on your name, O powerful one! that it is not by his hand, nor by his knowledge, that these things are done. I have had him

The Prophecy of the Stars

watched; I have even watched him myself; and seen his labor. One night I did approach and speak, as he was drawing the picture of this avenging sword. He answered me not; but looked with fixed stare into vacancy. I have at times hidden the parchment; and yet, in the early morn, there it is; more than once, before you have successfully fought your way to victory, he has pictured it out upon the parchment.

“Then there is one thing of which I must speak: I have known him to sit looking off into vacancy, and nothing could arouse him. I have seen great drops of sweat stand out upon his brow; seen his hands clench as if in mortal agony; and yet, when once again himself, he has denied to me, that he has either suffered pain or wasted his time. There is something strange about the lad; he does not care for play; but loses himself in deep thought, and, when he does awake, one gets no satisfaction from him.”

With a half scowl upon his face, Attila thought of the two boys. It was of Elver, that he thought the most; and, two hours later, he sent for him. For an hour, they were closeted

Sojourners by the Wayside

together: when Elver left the room, there was on Attila's face a sickly pallor, a look that seemed to say, "the end is near."

Soreser, a slave, entering her lord's room, saw in Attila's eyes an expression, in which love, fierceness and questioning, added to the grayish pallor, made her fearful; and she cried out "My lord! my lord! What troubleth thee?"

"Soreser, bid the captain who has my prisoner, the one you wot of, to come hither at once; and see to it, that we are not disturbed!"

The captain, entering, made a low obeisance; then waited Attila's pleasure.

"Is the woman still living?"

"Yes, my lord."

"And how fares the man?"

"He, too, still lives."

A terrible laugh rang out from Atilla as he said: "He, too, still lives, doth he! Tongueless, armless, hamstrung; and he still lives! And she, she whom I once loved, looks upon the man she preferred to me! Does she still love him? Surely, he hath no arms with which to hold her; and the wide slit, on either side of that false mouth of his, which is tongueless,

The Prophecy of the Stars

cannot add to his beauty. Tonight, bring her to my tent; but, before you bring her hither, tell her, that I am pleased with one of her sons, whom they say looks like her; but tell her that the other brat does not find favor in my eyes: I would have another to take his place. Begone!"

Stars and moon were covered with a dense black cloud. The captain purposely forgot to tell the Countess Alicia all that Attila bade him say; but when he found her with her arms around the neck of the man she loved, he did say, "Attila wishes to see you."

In the eyes of the man, lying there, unable to rise into a sitting posture, there came a gleam so fierce that she, who leaned above him said: "Fear not, I will come back to thee." Then kissing the unsightly mouth; then first one eye, and then the other, now filled with undying love for her, she left him, and arranged her dress of spotless white.

As she stepped into the circle of light outside the tent, where stood the captain and his guards, they saw, falling around her like a veil, the crowning glory of womanhood, a magnificent head of hair, which, in the light of their

Sojourners by the Wayside

torches, gleamed like burnished gold. She was fair; yet terribly emaciated, and her eyes expressed what she was, a beautiful soul.

She swayed slightly; then holding herself more erect, crossed to Attila's tent, and stepped into his presence. This tent was brilliantly lighted, and hung with costly decorations; on a stool near him was a tray, holding rich viands. With an imperious gesture, he motioned the captain from the tent; then gloated his eyes upon this peerless woman, whom he had loved with all the intense passion of his nature; but who had spurned him with scorn. She now met his gaze fearlessly.

At that moment, the two boys entered, and, standing in the full glow of the hanging lamp, the mother saw her sons. A great love illumined her face. Attila, beneath pent brows, watched the group closely. Something told her, that she had been brought there to undergo a still greater ordeal than she had already suffered.

Attila called Elver to him, motioning him to face the Countess. She saw, as if in miniature, the form and face of her husband. As she cried out, "My son! my son!" a fiendish

[192]

The Prophecy of the Stars

expression crossed Attila's face, and he motioned imperiously for Elver to step aside and for Disca to take his place, saying, "Well, woman, what have you to say to this, your other son?"

The woman looked into the eyes of the fair-haired boy with an intensity that brought out all the fearlessness and frankness of his character; but she made no reply to her tormentor.

Disca, stepping forward asked: "Are you our mother? Then, where is our father?"

Attila, who had watched the face of the woman, answered for her: "Do not be impatient: you and your mother will face him tomorrow."

Over the fair face of the mother came a swift expression of terror, which was quickly dispelled by one of hatred, and a glance that made even Attila drop his eyes; for, in her face, he saw a fixed determination, and also that, no matter how he tortured her or what she suffered, she would have the strength and courage not to give him the satisfaction of thinking that she feared him.

A sharp blow of a silver mallet summoned a slave, to whom he said, "Take care of my sons:

Sojourners by the Wayside

if even a scratch comes to them, your life will pay forfeit."

Elver gave one swift glance at his mother's face; but Disca faced Attila with such an expression of scorn and indignation, that it brought to the eyes of this human monster a glance so cruel, so vindictive, that those who were watching the two wondered that he did not slay the boy at once. "You! You my father! I do not believe it!" And with head erect, he followed Elver and the slave.

"Your lion whelp reminds me of you, my lady; the other of that weakling who has lived too long. Tomorrow we will see how the secrets he holds can be tortured from him; and you, and his sons, can witness the result. Now, what have you to say to me? For before he has been lashed to death, you, in the presence of the army, shall receive what you so richly deserve, one hundred lashes on your bare back. Yes! you shall receive them in the presence of my followers: your only covering, the long veil of hair, which I see still holds its golden sheen. This night I give you to yourself to pray: to him, to prepare for death. Begone! Go into that room and there remain. You know what

The Prophecy of the Stars

will buy your freedom from a public chastisement; but before you go, give me that poignard you have about you!"

"Shall I give it you in your heart?"

Then, without a backward glance, with stately step, head proudly lifted, she retired; and there sat in dumb misery through the long hours of the night. Once, during the night, she heard a stealthy step; but soon all was quiet. As the morning neared, she again heard a step; and, looking up, saw Disca standing before her. In a low whisper he said:

"I have seen my father; and some day I shall kill Attila. Elver saw him in one of his dreams: saw the way I could reach him. I have just returned. My father says 'Be brave: one can die but once. We shall never be parted in spirit. Live for our boys and to find our daughter.'"

A sound made Disca disappear so suddenly, that she could not convince herself that he had really left her. Soreser appeared, assisted her with her bath, and in the smoothing of the hair, which had been so much lauded; then, without a word, left the room. She soon returned with food on a silver salver; as it was refused, she

Sojourners by the Wayside

stooped as if to pick up something, and said, in a half audible whisper: "Your daughter lives;" then left.

Alone, thinking over the past, this woman, scarce thirty-three, still bearing in her face traces of beauty such as is rarely seen, pondered; and, pondered deeply, on how she could save the man she so deeply loved from the hands of the torturer. She knew, that he had passed beyond that period, where physical pain could wring from him a groan; but she knew, that, if he was called upon to see her receive, as had been threatened, the one hundred lashes for his sake; to be exposed to the evil glances, even the pitying glances, of the multitude; that he would suffer, as he had never suffered before. Rather, with her own hand, would she end his torture, could she but have the chance.

As she thought on what she had been subjected to at one time, of how, like a lioness, she had fought for her young and her honor, she wondered what was the power that had saved her; that had induced this Attila to suffer her sons to live. She shuddered, as she thought of her daughter just merging into womanhood; for although she had not seen her for twelve

The Prophecy of the Stars

years, she could, through her mental vision, see the grace of every movement, the exquisite beauty of face and form; and she knew why her life had been spared.

A great shuddering took possession of her, leaving her with a face like marble, and a fixed expression in her eyes, that seemed to be looking forth into futurity. Soreser entered. Over her arm was a robe of white velvet, embroidered with precious stones; she removed the worn out gown of the Countess; putting on in its place this robe, that befitted royalty. The prisoner's hair, flowing loosely, reached to the hem of her robe; her feet were covered with white sandals, the straps of which were thickly encrusted with gems.

A call from Attila's tent, brought her into his presence. Disca and Elver were already there; also a young girl, attired in simple white; with a long gossamer veil, through the meshes of which, could be seen the golden sheen of her hair. The Countess observed that her sons did not know this girl, nor she them.

Attila, arrayed in war-like garb, watched the four with an eagle glance. At last the shrill cry of many voices broke the stillness,

Sojourners by the Wayside

as a great horde of Attila's followers entered, and formed three sides of a hollow square, in the center of which lay her husband upon a low camp couch.

Disca, without one glance at Attila or his mother, took Elver by the hand, walked deliberately into the center of the square and knelt by his father's side. It was then, that Disca in a shrill, childish treble said, as he faced Attila, "I, the son of my father, will avenge his wrongs, and kill you, Attila! Do not think that you can shame my mother or kill me!"

As he ceased, a great shout went up from the barbaric host around; for cruel as these men were, they knew, that, had not some supernatural power sheltered this brave boy, before he had opportunity to speak, the order would have been given for his death. Attila appreciated courage, and looked upon this threat as but an idle boast from a brave boy.

The man, stretched on the couch, said something in a whisper, and, then, as if following an order given, they went to their mother's side: Disca standing at her right; Elver, at her left.

The Prophecy of the Stars

It was then, that Attila gave the command to proceed; but, before a hand could be laid upon the couch of him who for years had suffered untold tortures of mind and body, a veritable living death, One, higher than Attila, had taken him beyond all suffering.

Attila turned on his heel and entered his tent; but there was an expression in his eyes, that made the bravest in his presence shrink, not knowing where the impending blow would fall.

* * *

He who had been known as the bravest of the brave, true to every trust, a friend in time of need, one who had lived to the full the traditions of the great house from which he had sprung, had for the sake of his country and his honor, held to the last the secrets that had been rendered to his keeping.

That morning, he had appeared to Alicia, his countess, in spirit, strong and gallant, as she remembered him the morning their first child was born. He said to her: "Be of good courage, dear one. Soon, very soon, you and I will be together, where sorrow entereth not." After

Sojourners by the Wayside

this vision, she had gone forth with a fearless spirit and brave heart to see him die.

A message from Attila bade her and her boys to retire to the room, that she had occupied the night before. Her daughter had been spirited away.

Two nights passed, and, on the following morning, marks of disorder were apparent in her room, indicating a great struggle; and deeply imbedded in her heart was the slender poignard. But few dared to breathe it; yet it was known, that this was not the blow that had caused her death.

Disca and his brother disappeared from the camp.

* * *

Attila was about to make one of his famous raids. He had been betrothed to the fair Hilda; she being ignorant of the fact, that he had brought about the cruel death of her parents, a few years before.

On the evening, before his departure for the field of battle, he was to have been married; but the union never took place. History says, that the cause of his death was a hemorrhage, but, in the minds of many, it was Disca's hand that

The Prophecy of the Stars

struck the blow. It was Disca, who had been seen near Attila's tent; and there were those, who boldly said, that the son of the great Count had avenged the death of his father and mother.

* * *

Years afterward Disca was spoken of as a mighty warrior, proving by his brave deeds, the prophecy of the stars.

Elver, who had the power to see beyond mortal ken, and to arouse his fellow-men by the power of his silver speech and his great eloquence, died, after a season spent in a great monastery, where he was known as Brother Ambrose. Elver had revealed, through a study of the stars, what futurity was to bring to his race,—even the great changes now taking place on the European continent.

AFTERWORD

The object, arrangement and atmosphere of these incarnations was stated in my Foreword. This, being the first in the series, it has seemed best to awaken the interest of the reader before dealing with the astral and its influence on the physical plane; with aura; with the affect of colors and their origin; with cycles, on which I shall briefly touch; and with incarnation in a more serious manner.

In and out, even before the first incarnation under the caption of "What the Sea Cast Up," I have other incarnations, with which I shall open my second volume: the first of which deals with the stone age. Here and there, already, I have been given incarnations, which come between some already delineated in the present volume.

I have also been given fragments of others, in French and English history, which give me reason to believe will add their quota, in

Afterword

explaining the cause for certain cotemporaneous upheavals in the body politic.

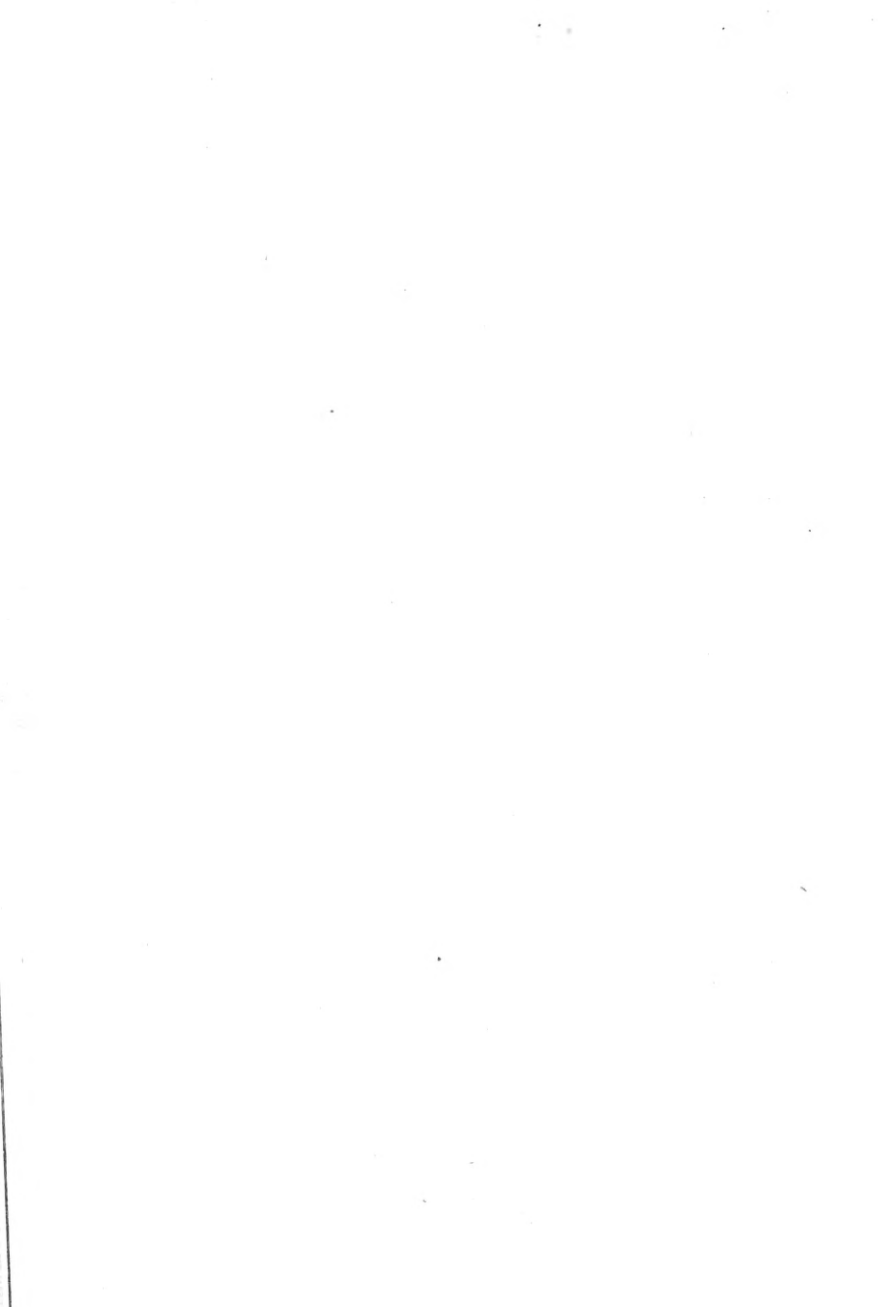
"Death is another life. We bow our heads
At going out, we think, and enter straight
Another chamber of the king's,
Larger than this we leave, and lovelier."

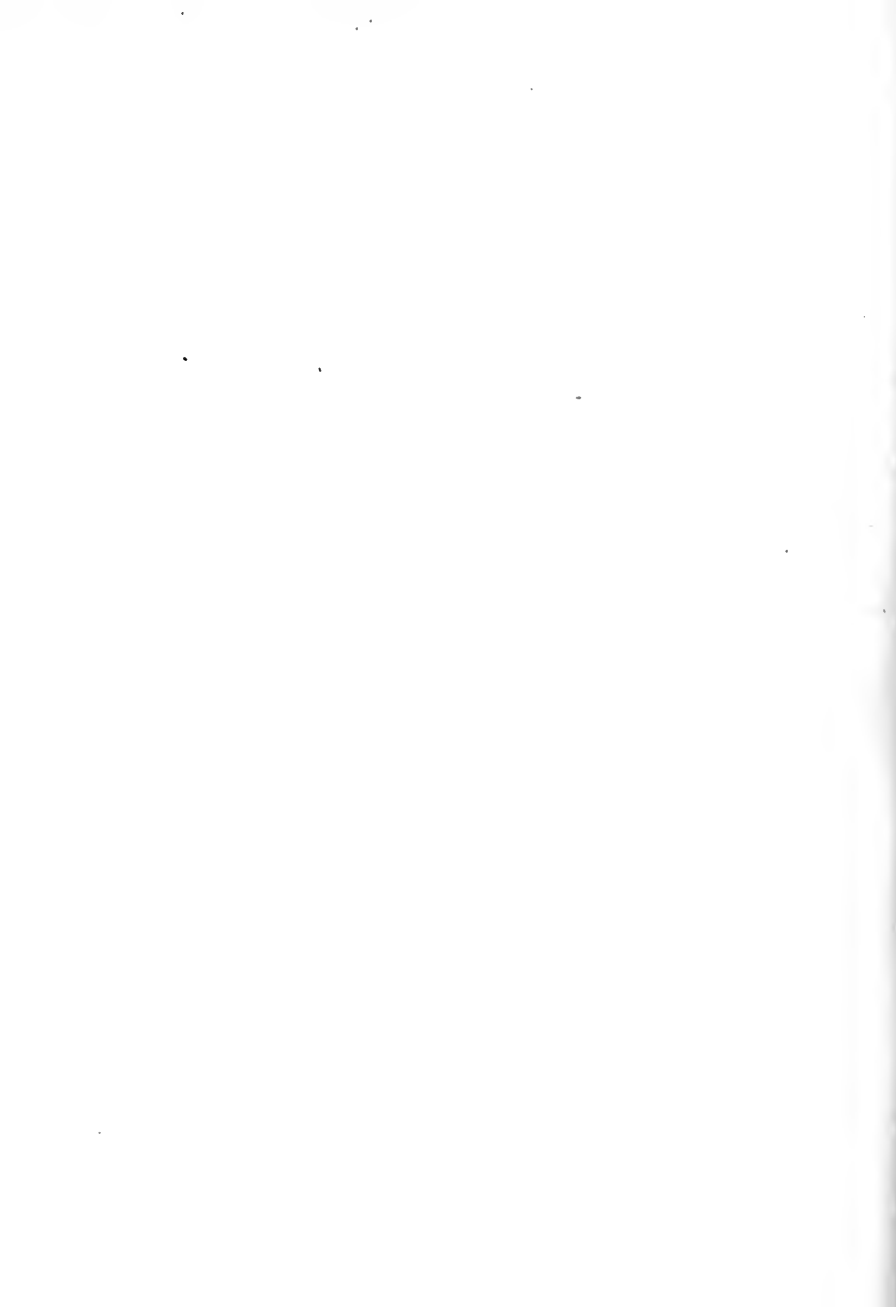
Bailey.

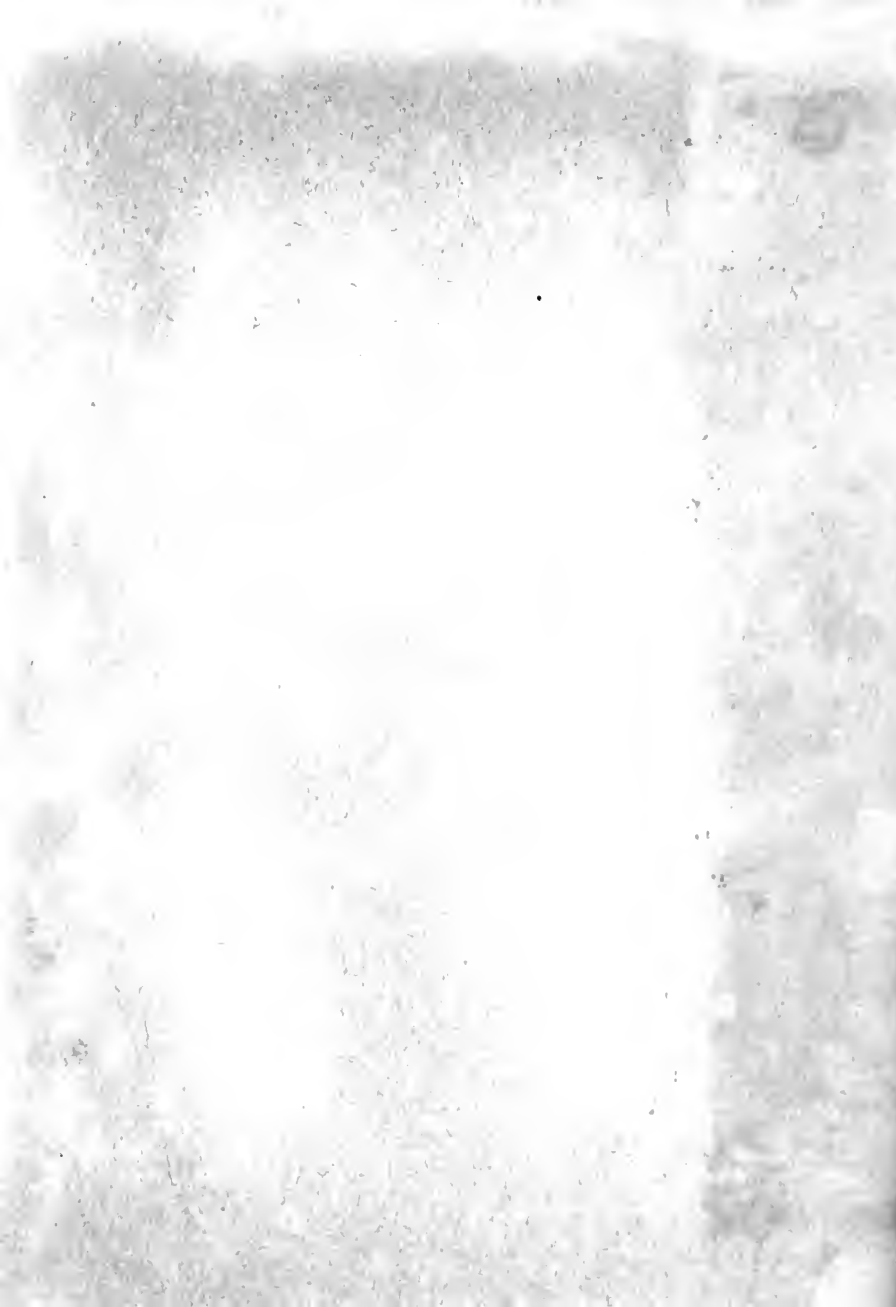












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